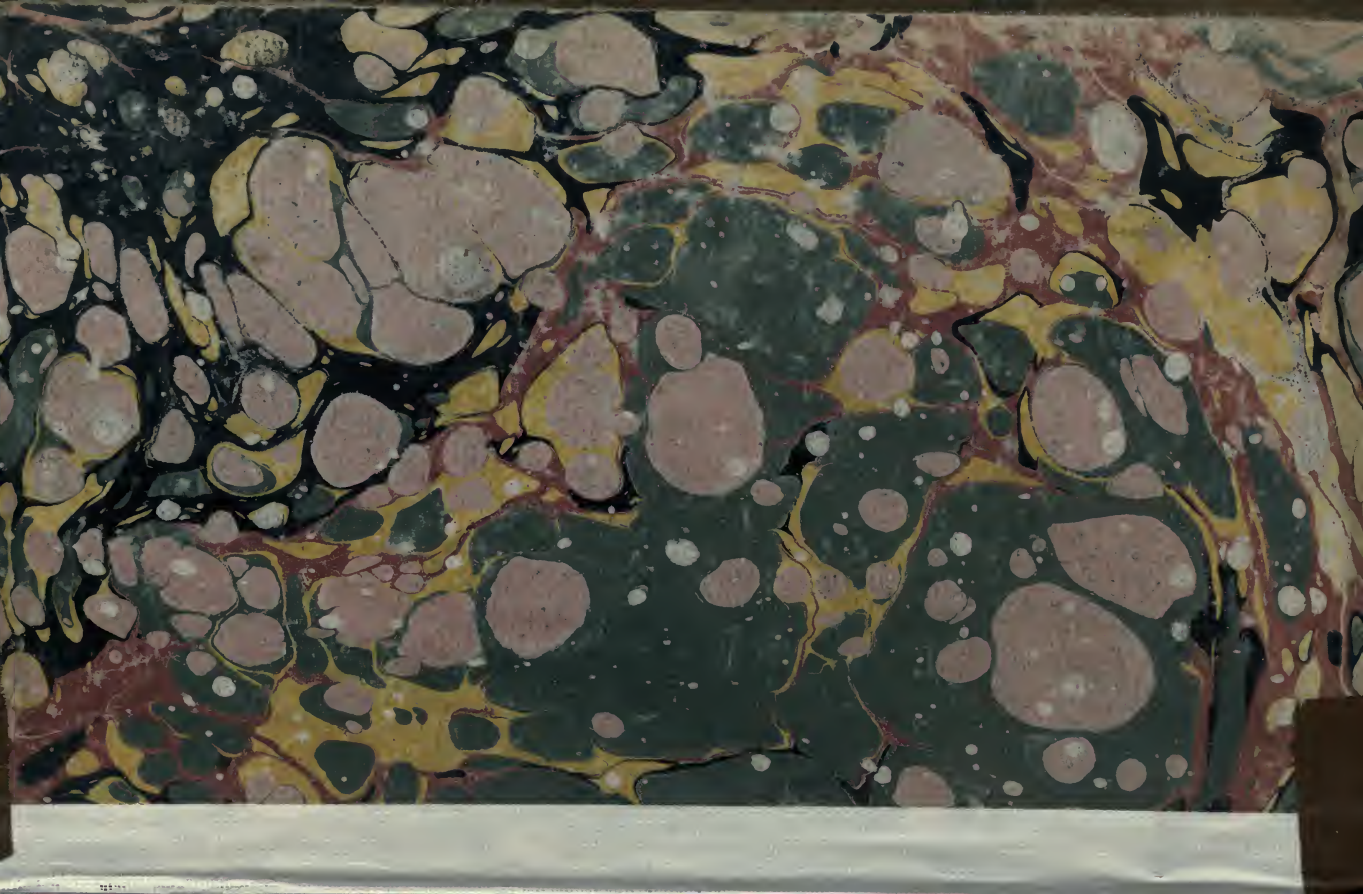

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CONTAINING

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Henrietta.
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Felicia to Charlotte.
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THE

HISTORY

OF

RASSELAS,

PRINCE OF ABISSINIA.

A TALE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY DR. JOHNSON.

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M DCC LXXXVII.

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THE HISTORY OF RASSELAS, PRINCE OF ABISSINIA.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

CHAP. I.

DESCRIPTION OF A PALACE IN A VALLEY.

YE who liſten with credulity to the whiſpers of fancy, and perſue with eagerneſs the phantoms of hope; who expect that age will perform the promiſes of youth, and that the deficiencies of the preſent day will be ſupplied by the morrow; attend to the hiſtory of Raſſelas prince of Abiſſinia.

Raſſelas was the fourth ſon of the mighty emperour, in whoſe dominions the Father of Waters begins his courſe; whoſe bounty pours down the ſtreams of plenty, and ſcatters over half the world the harveſts of Egypt.

According to the cuſtom which has deſcended from age to age among the monarchs of the torrid zone, Raſſelas was confined in a private palace, with the other ſons and daughters of Abiſſinian royalty, till the order of ſucceſſion ſhould call him to the throne.

The place, which the wiſdom or policy of antiquity had deſtined for the reſidence of the Abiſſinian princes, was a ſpacious valley in the kingdom of Amhara, ſurrounded on every ſide by mountains, of which the ſummits overhang the middle part. The only paſſage, by which it could be entered, was a cavern that paſſed under a rock, of which it has long been diſputed whether it was the work of nature or of human induſtry. The outlet of the cavern was concealed by a thick wood, and the mouth which opened into the valley was cloſed with gates of iron, forged by the artificers of ancient days, ſo maſſy that no man could without the help of engines open or ſhut them.

From the mountains on every ſide, rivulets deſcended that filled all the valley with verdure and fertility, and formed a lake in the middle inhabited by fiſh of every ſpecies, and frequented by every fowl whom nature has taught to dip the wing in water. This lake diſcharged it's ſuperfluities by a ſtream which entered a dark cleft of the mountain on the northern ſide, and fell with dreadful noiſe from precipice to precipice till it was heard no more.

The ſides of the mountains were covered with trees, the banks of the brooks were diverſified with flowers; every blaſt ſhook

ſhook ſpices from the rocks, and every month dropped fruits upon the ground. All animals that bite the graſs, or brouſe the ſhrub, whether wild or tame, wandered in this extenſive circuit, ſecured from beaſts of prey by the mountains which confined them. On one part were flocks and herds feeding in the paſtures, on another all the beaſts of chaſe friſking in the lawns; the ſprightly kid was bounding on the rocks, the ſubtle monkey frolicking in the trees, and the ſolemn elephant repoſing in the ſhade. All the diverſities of the world were brought together, the bleſſings of nature were collected, and it's evils extracted and excluded.

The valley, wide and fruitful, ſupplied it's inhabitants with the neceſſaries of life, and all delights and ſuperfluities were added at the annual viſit which the emperour paid his children, when the iron gate was opened to the ſound of muſick; and during eight days every one that reſided in the valley was required to propoſe whatever might contribute to make ſecluſion pleaſant, to fill up the vacancies of attention, and leſſen the tediouſneſs of time. Every deſire was immediately granted. All the artificers of pleaſure were called to gladden the feſtivity; the muſicians exerted the power of harmony, and the dancers ſhewed their activity before the princes, in hope that they ſhould paſs their lives in this bliſsful captivity, to which thoſe only were admitted whoſe performance was thought able to add novelty to luxury. Such was the appearance of ſecurity and delight which this retirement afforded, that they, to whom it was new, always deſired that it might be perpetual; and as thoſe, on whom the iron gate had once cloſed, were never ſuffered to return, the effect of longer experience could not be known. Thus every year produced new ſchemes of delight, and new competitors for impriſonment.

The palace ſtood on an eminence raiſed about thirty paces above the ſurface of the lake. It was divided into many ſquares or courts, built with greater or leſs magnificence, according to the rank of thoſe for whom they were deſigned. The roofs were turned into arches of maſſy ſtone joined by a cement that grew harder by time, and the building ſtood from century to century deriding the ſolſtitial rains and equinoctial hurricanes, without need of reparation.

This houſe, which was ſo large as to be fully known to none but ſome ancient officers who ſucceſſively inherited the ſecrets of the place, was built as if ſuſpicion herſelf had dictated the plan. To every room there was an open and ſecret paſſage, every ſquare had a communication with the reſt, either from the upper ſtories by private galleries, or by ſubterranean paſſages from the lower apartments. Many of the columns had unſuſpected cavities, in which a long race of monarchs had repoſited their treaſures. They then cloſed up the opening with marble, which was never to be removed but in the utmoſt exigencies of the kingdom; and recorded their accumulations in a book which was itſelf concealed in a tower not entered but by the emperour, attended by the prince who ſtood next in ſucceſſion.

CHAP. II.

THE DISCONTENT OF RASSELAS IN THE HAPPY VALLEY.

HERE the ſons and daughters of Abiſſinia lived only to know the ſoft viciſſitudes of pleaſure and repoſe, attended by all that were ſkilful to delight, and gratified with whatever the ſenſes can enjoy. They wandered in gardens of fragrance, and ſlept in the fortreſſes of ſecurity. Every art was practiſed to make them pleaſed with their own condition. The ſages who inſtructed them, told them of nothing but the miſeries of publick life, and deſcribed all beyond the mountains as regions of calamity, where diſcord was always raging, and where man preyed upon man.

To heighten their opinion of their own felicity, they were daily entertained with ſongs, the ſubject of which was the *happy valley*. Their appetites were excited by frequent enumerations of different enjoyments, and revelry and merriment was the buſineſs of every hour from the dawn of morning to the cloſe of even.

Theſe methods were generally ſucceſsful; few of the princes had ever wiſhed to enlarge their bounds, but paſſed their lives in full conviction that they had all within their reach that art or nature could beſtow, and pitied thoſe whom fate had excluded from this ſeat of tranquillity, as the ſport of chance and the ſlaves of miſery.

Thus

Thus they rose in the morning and lay down at night, pleased with each other and with themselves, all but Rasselas, who in the twenty-sixth year of his age began to withdraw himself from their pastimes and assemblies, and to delight in solitary walks and silent meditation. He often sat before tables covered with luxury, and forgot to taste the dainties that were placed before him: he rose abruptly in the midst of the song, and hastily retired beyond the sound of musick. His attendants observed the change, and endeavoured to renew his love of pleasure: he neglected their officiousness, repulsed their invitations, and spent day after day on the banks of rivulets sheltered with trees, where he sometimes listened to the birds in the branches, sometimes observed the fish playing in the stream, and anon cast his eyes upon the pastures and mountains filled with animals, of which some were biting the herbage, and some sleeping among the bushes.

This singularity of his humour made him much observed One of the sages, in whose conversation he had formerly delighted, followed him secretly, in hope of discovering the cause of his disquiet. Rasselas, who knew not that any one was near him, having for some time fixed his eyes upon the goats that were brousing among the rocks, began to compare their condition with his own.

'What,' said he, 'makes the difference between man and all the rest 'of the animal creation? Every beast 'that strays beside me has the same corporal necessities with myself; he is 'hungry and crops the grass, he is 'thirsty and drinks the stream, his thirst 'and hunger are appeased, he is satisfied 'and sleeps; he rises again and is hungry, he is again fed and is at rest. I 'am hungry and thirsty like him, but 'when thirst and hunger cease I am not 'at rest; I am, like him, pained with 'want, but am not, like him, satisfied 'with fulness. The intermediate hours 'are tedious and gloomy; I long again 'to be hungry that I may again quicken 'my attention. The birds peck the 'berries or the corn, and fly away to 'the groves where they sit in seeming 'happiness on the branches, and waste 'their lives in tuning one unvaried series of sounds. I likewise can call the 'lutanist and the singer, but the sounds 'that pleased me yesterday weary me to-'day, and will grow yet more wearisome 'to-morrow. I can discover within me 'no power of perception which is not 'glutted with it's proper pleasure, yet I 'do not feel myself delighted. Man 'surely has some latent sense for which 'this place affords no gratification, or 'he has some desires distinct from sense 'which must be satisfied before he can 'be happy.'

After this he lifted up his head, and seeing the moon rising, walked towards the palace. As he passed through the fields, and saw the animals around him, 'Ye,' said he, 'are happy, and need 'not envy me that walk thus among you, 'burdened with myself; nor do I, ye 'gentle beings, envy your felicity, for 'it is not the felicity of man. I have 'many distresses from which ye are free; 'I fear pain when I do not feel it; I 'sometimes shrink at evils recollected, 'and sometimes start at evils anticipated: surely the equity of Providence 'has balanced peculiar sufferings with 'peculiar enjoyments.'

With observations like these the prince amused himself as he returned, uttering them with a plaintive voice, yet with a look that discovered him to feel some complacence in his own perspicacity, and to receive some solace of the miseries of life, from consciousness of the delicacy with which he felt, and the eloquence with which he bewailed them. He mingled cheerfully in the diversions of the evening, and all rejoiced to find that his heart was lightened.

CHAP. III.

THE WANTS OF HIM THAT WANTS NOTHING.

ON the next day his old instructor, imagining that he had now made himself acquainted with his disease of mind, was in hope of curing it by counsel, and officiously sought an opportunity of conference, which the prince, having long considered him as one whose intellects were exhausted, was not very willing to afford. 'Why,' said he, 'does this man thus intrude upon me; 'shall I be never suffered to forget those 'lectures which pleased only while they 'were new, and to become new again 'must be forgotten?' He then walked into the wood, and composed himself to his

his usual meditations; when, before his thoughts had taken any settled form, he perceived his pursuer at his side, and was at first prompted by his impatience to go hastily away; but, being unwilling to offend a man whom he had once reverenced and still loved, he invited him to sit down with him on the bank.

The old man, thus encouraged, began to lament the change which had been lately observed in the prince, and to enquire why he so often retired from the pleasures of the palace, to lonelineſs and silence. 'I fly from pleasure,' said the prince, 'because pleasure has ceased to 'please; I am lonely because I am miserable, and am unwilling to cloud 'with my presence the happiness of 'others.'—'You, Sir,' said the sage, 'are the first who has complained of 'misery in the *happy valley*. I hope to 'convince you that your complaints 'have no real cause. You are here in 'full possession of all that the emperour 'of Abissinia can bestow; here is neither 'labour to be endured nor danger to be 'dreaded, yet here is all that labour or 'danger can procure or purchase. Look 'round and tell me which of your wants 'is without supply: if you want nothing, 'how are you unhappy?'

'That I want nothing,' said the prince, 'or that I know not what I 'want, is the cause of my complaint; 'if I had any known want, I should 'have a certain wish; that wish would 'excite endeavour, and I should not 'then repine to see the sun move so 'slowly towards the western mountain, 'or lament when the day breaks, and 'sleep will no longer hide me from my'self. When I see the kids and the 'lambs chasing one another, I fancy 'that I should be happy if I had some'thing to persue. But, possessing all 'that I can want, I find one day and 'one hour exactly like another, except 'that the latter is still more tedious than 'the former. Let your experience in'form me how the day may now seem 'as short as in my childhood, while 'nature was yet fresh, and every mo'ment shewed me what I never had ob'served before. I have already enjoyed 'too much; give me something to desire.'

The old man was surprised at this new species of affliction, and knew not what to reply, yet was unwilling to be silent. 'Sir,' said he, 'if you had seen the 'miseries of the world, you would 'know how to value your present state.' —'Now,' said the prince, 'you have 'given me something to desire; I shall 'long to see the miseries of the world, 'since the sight of them is necessary to 'happiness.'

CHAP. IV.

THE PRINCE CONTINUES TO GRIEVE AND MUSE.

At this time the sound of musick proclaimed the hour of repast, and the conversation was concluded. The old man went away sufficiently discontented, to find that his reasonings had produced the only conclusion which they were intended to prevent. But in the decline of life shame and grief are of short duration; whether it be that we bear easily what we have borne long; or that, finding ourselves in age less regarded, we less regard others; or, that we look with slight regard upon afflictions, to which we know that the hand of death is about to put an end.

The prince, whose views were extended to a wider space, could not speedily quiet his emotions. He had been before terrified at the length of life which nature promised him, because he considered that in a long time much must be endured; he now rejoiced in his youth, because in many years much might be done.

This first beam of hope, that had been ever darted into his mind, rekindled youth in his cheeks, and doubled the lustre of his eyes. He was fired with the desire of doing something, though he knew not yet with distinctness either end or means.

He was now no longer gloomy and unsocial; but, considering himself as master of a secret stock of happiness, which he could enjoy only by concealing it, he affected to be busy in all schemes of diversion, and endeavoured to make others pleased with the state of which he himself was weary. But pleasures never can be so multiplied or continued, as not to leave much of life unemployed; there were many hours, both of the night and day, which he could spend without suspicion in solitary thought. The load of life was much lightened: he went eagerly into the assemblies, because he supposed the frequency of his presence

necessary

neceſſary to the ſucceſs of his purpoſes; he retired gladly to privacy, becauſe he had now a ſubject of thought.

His chief amuſement was to picture to himſelf that world which he had never ſeen; to place himſelf in various conditions; to be entangled in imaginary difficulties, and to be engaged in wild adventures: but his benevolence always terminated his projects in the relief of diſtreſs, the detection of fraud, the defeat of oppreſſion, and the diffuſion of happineſs.

Thus paſſed twenty months of the life of Raſſelas. He buſied himſelf ſo intenſely in viſionary buſtle, that he forgot his real ſolitude; and, amidſt hourly preparations for the various incidents of human affairs, neglected to conſider by what means he ſhould mingle with mankind.

One day, as he was ſitting on a bank, he feigned to himſelf an orphan virgin robbed of her little portion by a treacherous lover, and crying after him for reſtitution and redreſs. So ſtrongly was the image impreſſed upon his mind, that he ſtarted up in the maid's defence, and run forward to ſeize the plunderer with all the eagerneſs of real purſuit. Fear naturally quickens the flight of guilt. Raſſelas could not catch the fugitive with his utmoſt efforts; but, reſolving to weary by perſeverance, him whom he could not ſurpaſs in ſpeed, he preſſed on till the foot of the mountain ſtopped his courſe.

Here he recollected himſelf, and ſmiled at his own uſeleſs impetuoſity. Then raiſing his eyes to the mountain—'This,' ſaid he, 'is the fatal obſtacle that hinders at once the enjoyment of pleaſure, and the exerciſe of virtue. How long is it that my hopes and wiſhes have flown beyond this boundary of my life, which yet I never have attempted to ſurmount!'

Struck with this reflection, he ſat down to muſe; and remembered, that ſince he firſt reſolved to eſcape from his confinement, the ſun had paſſed twice over him in his annual courſe. He now felt a degree of regret with which he had never been before acquainted. He conſidered how much might have been done in the time which had paſſed, and left nothing real behind it. He compared twenty months with the life of man. 'In life,' ſaid he, 'is not to be counted the ignorance of infancy, or imbecility of age. We are long before we are able to think, and we ſoon ceaſe from the power of acting. The true period of human exiſtence may be reaſonably eſtimated at forty years, of which I have muſed away the four and twentieth part. What I have loſt was certain, for I have certainly poſſeſſed it; but of twenty months to come who can aſſure me?'

The conſciouſneſs of his own folly pierced him deeply, and he was long before he could be reconciled to himſelf. 'The reſt of my time,' ſaid he, 'has been loſt by the crime or folly of my anceſtors, and the abſurd inſtitutions of my country; I remember it with diſguſt, yet without remorſe: but the months that have paſſed ſince new light darted into my ſoul, ſince I formed a ſcheme of reaſonable felicity, have been ſquandered by my own fault. I have loſt that which can never be reſtored: I have ſeen the ſun riſe and ſet for twenty months, an idle gazer on the light of heaven: in this time the birds have left the neſt of their mother, and committed themſelves to the woods and to the ſkies: the kid has forſaken the teat, and learned by degrees to climb the rocks in queſt of independent ſuſtenance. I only have made no advances, but am ſtill helpleſs and ignorant. The moon, by more than twenty changes, admoniſhed me of the flux of life; the ſtream that rolled before my feet upbraided my inactivity. I ſat feaſting on intellectual luxury, regardleſs alike of the examples of the earth, and the inſtructions of the planets. Twenty months are paſſed, who ſhall reſtore them?'

Theſe ſorrowful meditations faſtened upon his mind; he paſſed four months in reſolving to loſe no more time in idle reſolves, and was awakened to more vigorous exertion, by hearing a maid, who had broken a porcelain cup, remark, that what cannot be repaired is not to be regretted.

This was obvious; and Raſſelas reproached himſelf that he had not diſcovered it, having not known, or not conſidered, how many uſeful hints are obtained by chance, and how often the mind, hurried by her own ardour to diſtant views, neglects the truths that lie open before her. He, for a few hours, regretted his regret, and from that time bent his whole mind upon the

means of escaping from the valley of happiness.

CHAP. V.

THE PRINCE MEDITATES HIS ESCAPE.

HE now found that it would be very difficult to effect that which it was very easy to suppose effected. When he looked round about him, he saw himself confined by the bars of nature which had never yet been broken, and by the gate, through which none that once had passed it were ever able to return. He was now impatient as an eagle in a grate. He passed week after week in clambering the mountains, to see if there was any aperture which the bushes might conceal, but found all the summits inaccessible by their prominence. The iron gate he despaired to open; for it was not only secured with all the power of art, but was always watched by successive sentinels, and was by it's position exposed to the perpetual observation of all the inhabitants.

He then examined the cavern through which the waters of the lake were discharged; and, looking down at a time when the sun shone strongly upon it's mouth, he discovered it to be full of broken rocks, which, though they permitted the stream to flow through many narrow passages, would stop any body of solid bulk. He returned discouraged and dejected; but, having now known the blessing of hope, resolved never to despair.

In these fruitless searches he spent ten months. The time, however, passed cheerfully away: in the morning he rose with new hope, in the evening applauded his own diligence, and in the night slept sound after his fatigue. He met a thousand amusements which beguiled his labour, and diversified his thoughts. He discerned the various instincts of animals, and properties of plants, and found the place replete with wonders, of which he purposed to solace himself with the contemplation, if he should never be able to accomplish his flight; rejoicing that his endeavours, though yet unsuccessful, had supplied him with a source of inexhaustible enquiry.

But his original curiosity was not yet abated; he resolved to obtain some knowledge of the ways of men. His wish still continued, but his hope grew less. He ceased to survey any longer the walls of his prison, and spared to search by new toils for interstices which he knew could not be found, yet determined to keep his design always in view, and lay hold on any expedient that time should offer.

CHAP. VI.

A DISSERTATION ON THE ART OF FLYING.

AMONG the artists that had been allured into the happy valley, to labour for the accommodation and pleasure of it's inhabitants, was a man eminent for his knowledge of the mechanick powers, who had contrived many engines both of use and recreation. By a wheel, which the stream turned, he forced the water into a tower, whence it was distributed to all the apartments of the palace. He erected a pavilion in the garden, around which he kept the air always cool by artificial showers. One of the groves, appropriated to the ladies, was ventilated by fans, to which the rivulet that run through it gave a constant motion; and instruments of soft musick were placed at proper distances, of which some played by the impulse of the wind, and some by the power of the stream.

This artist was sometimes visited by Rasselas, who was pleased with every kind of knowledge, imagining that the time would come when all his acquisitions should be of use to him in the open world. He came one day to amuse himself in his usual manner, and found the master busy in building a sailing chariot: he saw that the design was practicable upon a level surface, and with expressions of great esteem solicited it's completion. The workman was pleased to find himself so much regarded by the prince, and resolved to gain yet higher honours. 'Sir,' said he, 'you have 'seen but a small part of what the me-'chanick sciences can perform. I have 'been long of opinion, that instead of 'the tardy conveyance of ships and 'chariots, man might use the swifter 'migration of wings; that the fields of 'air

'air are open to knowledge, and that 'only ignorance and idleneſs need crawl 'upon the ground.'

This hint rekindled the prince's deſire of paſſing the mountains; having ſeen what the mechaniſt had already performed, he was willing to fancy that he could do more; yet reſolved to enquire further, before he ſuffered hope to afflict him by diſappointment. 'I am 'afraid,' ſaid he to the artiſt, 'that 'your imagination prevails over your 'ſkill, and that you now tell me rather 'what you wiſh, than what you know. 'Every animal has his element aſſigned 'him; the birds have the air, and man 'and beaſts the earth.'—'So,' replied the mechaniſt, 'fiſhes have the water, 'in which yet beaſts can ſwim by na'ture, and men by art. He that can 'ſwim needs not deſpair to fly: to ſwim 'is to fly in a groſſer fluid, and to fly is 'to ſwim in a ſubtler. We are only to 'proportion our power of reſiſtance to 'the different denſity of matter through 'which we are to paſs. You will be 'neceſſarily upborn by the air, if you 'can renew any impulſe upon it, faſter 'than the air can recede from the preſ'ſure.'

'But the exerciſe of ſwimming,' ſaid the prince, 'is very laborious; the 'ſtrongeſt limbs are ſoon wearied; I am 'afraid the act of flying will be yet more 'violent; and wings will be of no great 'uſe, unleſs we can fly further than we 'can ſwim.'

'The labour of riſing from the 'ground,' ſaid the artiſt, 'will be great, 'as we ſee it in the heavier domeſtick 'fowls, but as we mount higher, the 'earth's attraction, and the body's gra'vity, will be gradually diminiſhed, till 'we ſhall arrive at a region where the 'man will float in the air without any 'tendency to fall: no care will then be 'neceſſary but to move forwards, which 'the gentleſt impulſe will effect. You, 'Sir, whoſe curioſity is ſo extenſive, will 'eaſily conceive with what pleaſure a 'philoſopher, furniſhed with wings, 'and hovering in the ſky, would ſee the 'earth, and all it's inhabitants, rolling 'beneath him, and preſenting to him 'ſucceſſively, by it's diurnal motion, all 'the countries within the ſame parallel. 'How muſt it amuſe the pendent ſpec'tator to ſee the moving ſcene of land 'and ocean, cities and deſarts! To ſur'vey with equal ſecurity the marts of 'trade, and the fields of battle; moun'tains infeſted by barbarians, and fruit'ful regions gladdened by plenty, and 'lulled by peace! How eaſily ſhall we 'then trace the Nile through all his paſ'ſage; paſs over to diſtant regions, and 'examine the face of nature from one 'extremity of the earth to the other!'

'All this,' ſaid the prince, 'is much 'to be deſired; but I am afraid that no 'man will be able to breathe in theſe 'regions of ſpeculation and tranquillity. 'I have been told, that reſpiration is 'difficult upon lofty mountains, yet 'from theſe precipices, though ſo high 'as to produce great tenuity of air, it is 'very eaſy to fall: therefore I ſuſpect, 'that from any height, where life can 'be ſupported, there may be danger of 'too quick deſcent.'

'Nothing,' replied the artiſt, 'will 'ever be attempted, if all poſſible ob'jections muſt be firſt overcome. If 'you will favour my project, I will try 'the firſt flight at my own hazard. I 'have conſidered the ſtructure of all vo'lant animals, and find the folding con'tinuity of the bat's wings moſt eaſily 'accommodated to the human form. 'Upon this model I ſhall begin my taſk 'to morrow, and in a year expect to 'tower into the air beyond the malice 'and purſuit of man. But I will work 'only on this condition, that the art 'ſhall not be divulged, and that you 'ſhall not require me to make wings 'for any but ourſelves.'

'Why,' ſaid Raſſelas, 'ſhould you 'envy others ſo great an advantage? 'All ſkill ought to be exerted for uni'verſal good; every man has owed 'much to others, and ought to repay 'the kindneſs that he has received.'

'If men were all virtuous,' returned the artiſt, 'I ſhould with great alacrity 'teach them all to fly. But what would 'be the ſecurity of the good, if the bad 'could at pleaſure invade them from the 'ſky? Againſt an army ſailing through 'the clouds, neither walls, nor moun'tains, nor ſeas, could afford any ſe'curity. A flight of northern ſavages 'might hover in the wind, and light at 'once with irreſiſtible violence upon the 'capital of a fruitful region that was 'rolling under them. Even this valley, 'the retreat of princes, the abode of 'happineſs, might be violated by the

'sudden descent of some of the naked 'nations that swarm on the coast of the 'southern sea.'

The prince promised secrecy, and waited for the performance, not wholly hopeless of success. He visited the work from time to time, observed it's progress, and remarked many ingenious contrivances to facilitate motion, and unite levity with strength. The artist was every day more certain that he should leave vultures and eagles behind him, and the contagion of his confidence seized upon the prince.

In a year the wings were finished, and, on a morning appointed, the maker appeared furnished for flight, on a little promontory: he waved his pinions a while to gather air, then leaped from his stand, and in an instant dropped into the lake. His wings which were of no use in the air, sustained him in the water, and the prince drew him to land, half dead with terror and vexation.

CHAP. VII.

THE PRINCE FINDS A MAN OF LEARNING.

THE prince was not much afflicted by this disaster, having suffered himself to hope for a happier event, only because he had no other means of escape in view. He still persisted in his design to leave the happy valley by the first opportunity.

His imagination was now at a stand: he had no prospect of entering into the world; and, notwithstanding all his endeavours to support himself, discontent by degrees preyed upon him, and he began again to lose his thoughts in sadness, when the rainy season, which in these countries is periodical, made it inconvenient to wander in the woods.

The rain continued longer and with more violence than had been ever known: the clouds broke on the surrounding mountains, and the torrents streamed into the plain on every side, till the cavern was too narrow to discharge the water. The lake overflowed it's banks, and all the level of the valley was covered with the inundation. The eminence, on which the palace was built, and some other spots of rising ground, were all that the eye could now discover. The herds and flocks left the pastures, and both the wild beasts and the tame retreated to the mountains.

This inundation confined all the princes to domestick amusements, and the attention of Rasselas was particularly seized by a poem, which Imlac rehearsed, upon the various conditions of humanity. He commanded the poet to attend him in his apartment, and recite his verses a second time; then entering into familiar talk, he thought himself happy in having found a man who knew the world so well, and could so skilfully paint the scenes of life. He asked a thousand questions about things, to which, though common to all other mortals, his confinement from childhood had kept him a stranger. The poet pitied his ignorance, and loved his curiosity, and entertained him from day to day with novelty and instruction, so that the prince regretted the necessity of sleep, and longed till the morning should renew his pleasure.

As they were sitting together, the prince commanded Imlac to relate his history, and to tell by what accident he was forced, or by what motive induced, to close his life in the happy valley. As he was going to begin his narrative, Rasselas was called to a concert, and obliged to restrain his curiosity till the evening.

CHAP. VIII.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC.

THE close of the day is, in the regions of the torrid zone, the only season of diversion and entertainment, and it was therefore midnight before the musick ceased, and the princesses retired. Rasselas then called for his companion, and required him to begin the story of his life.

'Sir,' said Imlac, 'my history will 'not be long: the life that is devoted 'to knowledge passes silently away, and 'is very little diversified by events. To 'talk in publick, to think in solitude, 'to read and to hear, to enquire, and 'answer enquiries, is the business of 'a scholar. He wanders about the 'world without pomp or terrour, and is 'neither known nor valued but by men 'like himself.

'I was born in the kingdom of Goiama, at no great distance from the 'fountain

Vol. I.

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342

'fountain of the Nile. My father was 'a wealthy merchant, who traded be-'tween the inland countries of Africk 'and the ports of the Red Sea. He was 'honeſt, frugal, and diligent, but of 'mean ſentiments, and narrow com-'prehenſion: he deſired only to be rich, 'and to conceal his riches, leſt he ſhould 'be ſpoiled by the governours of the 'province.'

'Surely,' ſaid the prince, 'my father 'muſt be negligent of his charge, if any 'man in his dominions dares take that 'which belongs to another. Does he 'not know that kings are accountable 'for injuſtice permitted as well as done? 'If I were emperour, not the meaneſt 'of my ſubjects ſhould be oppreſſed with 'impunity. My blood boils when I am 'told that a merchant durſt not enjoy 'his honeſt gains for fear of loſing them 'by the rapacity of power. Name the 'governour who robbed the people, that 'I may declare his crimes to the em-'perour.'

'Sir,' ſaid Imlac, 'your ardour is 'the natural effect of virtue animated 'by youth: the time will come when 'you will acquit your father, and per-'haps hear with leſs impatience of the 'governour. Oppreſſion is, in the Abiſ-'ſinian dominions, neither frequent nor 'tolerated; but no form of government 'has been yet diſcovered, by which cru-'elty can be wholly prevented. Sub-'ordination ſuppoſes power on one part, 'and ſubjection on the other; and if 'power be in the hands of men, it will 'ſometimes be abuſed. The vigilance 'of the ſupreme magiſtrate may do 'much, but much will ſtill remain un-'done. He can never know all the 'crimes that are committed, and can 'ſeldom puniſh all that he knows.'

'This,' ſaid the prince, 'I do not 'underſtand, but I had rather hear 'thee than diſpute. Continue thy nar-'ration.'

'My father,' proceeded Imlac, 'ori-'ginally intended that I ſhould have 'no other education, than ſuch as might 'qualify me for commerce; and diſco-'vering in me great ſtrength of me-'mory, and quickneſs of apprehen-'ſion, often declared his hope that I 'ſhould be ſome time the richeſt man in 'Abiſſinia.'

'Why,' ſaid the prince, 'did thy 'father deſire the increaſe of his wealth, 'when it was already greater than he 'durſt diſcover or enjoy? I am unwil-'ling to doubt thy veracity, yet incon-'ſiſtencies cannot both be true.'

'Inconſiſtencies,' anſwered Imlac, 'cannot both be right, but, imputed to 'man, they may both be true. Yet di-'verſity is not inconſiſtency. My father 'might expect a time of greater ſecuri-'ty. However, ſome deſire is neceſ-'ſary to keep life in motion, and he 'whoſe real wants are ſupplied, muſt 'admit thoſe of fancy.'

'This,' ſaid the prince, 'I can in 'ſome meaſure conceive. I repent that 'I interrupted thee.'

'With this hope,' proceeded Imlac, 'he ſent me to ſchool; but when I had 'once found the delight of knowledge, 'and felt the pleaſure of intelligence 'and the pride of invention, I began 'ſilently to deſpiſe riches, and deter-'mined to diſappoint the purpoſe of my 'father, whoſe groſſneſs of conception 'raiſed my pity. I was twenty years 'old before his tenderneſs would expoſe 'me to the fatigue of travel, in which 'time I had been inſtructed, by ſucceſ-'ſive maſters, in all the literature of my 'native country. As every hour taught 'me ſomething new, I lived in a con-'tinual courſe of gratifications; but, as 'I advanced towards manhood, I loſt 'much of the reverence with which I 'had been uſed to look on my inſtruc-'tors; becauſe, when the leſſon was 'ended, I did not find them wiſer or 'better than common men.

'At length my father reſolved to 'initiate me in commerce, and opening 'one of his ſubterranean treaſuries, 'counted out ten thouſand pieces of gold. "This, young man," ſaid he, "is "the ſtock with which you muſt nego-"ciate. I began with leſs than the fifth "part, and you ſee how diligence and "parſimony have increaſed it. This is "your own to waſte or to improve. If "you ſquander it by negligence or ca-"price, you muſt wait for my death be-"fore you will be rich: if, in four years, "you double your ſtock, we will thence-"forward let ſubordination ceaſe, and "live together as friends and partners; "for he ſhall always be equal with me, "who is equally ſkilled in the art of "growing rich."

'We laid our money upon camels, 'concealed in bales of cheap goods, and 'travelled

'travelled to the shore of the Red Sea. 'When I cast my eye on the expanse of 'waters, my heart bounded like that of 'a prisoner escaped. I felt an unextin-'guishable curiosity kindle in my mind, 'and resolved to snatch this opportu-'nity of seeing the manners of other na-'tions, and of learning sciences un-'known in Abissinia.

'I remembered that my father had 'obliged me to the improvement of my 'stock, not by a promise which I ought 'not to violate, but by a penalty which 'I was at liberty to incur; and there-'fore determined to gratify my predo-'minant desire, and by drinking at the 'fountains of knowledge, to quench 'the thirst of curiosity.

'As I was supposed to trade without 'connexion with my father, it was easy 'for me to become acquainted with the 'master of a ship, and procure a pas-'sage to some other country. I had no 'motives of choice to regulate my voy-'age; it was sufficient for me that, 'wherever I wandered, I should see a 'country which I had not seen before. 'I therefore entered a ship bound for 'Surat, having left a letter for my fa-'ther declaring my intention.

CHAP. IX.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

'WHEN I first entered upon the 'world of waters, and lost sight 'of land, I looked round about me with 'pleasing terrour, and thinking my soul 'enlarged by the boundless prospect, 'imagined that I could gaze round for 'ever without satiety; but, in a short 'time, I grew weary of looking on bar-'ren uniformity, where I could only see 'again what I had already seen. I then 'descended into the ship, and doubted 'for a while whether all my future plea-'sures would not end like this, in dis-'gust and disappointment. "Yet, sure-"ly," said I, "the ocean and the land "are very different; the only variety of "water is rest and motion, but the earth "has mountains and vallies, deserts and "cities: it is inhabited by men of dif-"ferent customs and contrary opinions; "and I may hope to find variety "in life, though I should miss it in na-"ture.

'With this thought I quieted my 'mind, and amused myself during the 'voyage, sometimes by learning from 'the sailors the art of navigation, which 'I have never practised, and sometimes 'by forming schemes for my conduct in 'different situations, in not one of which 'I have been ever placed.

'I was almost weary of my naval 'amusements when we landed safely at 'Surat. I secured my money, and pur-'chasing some commodities for show, 'joined myself to a caravan that was 'passing into the inland country. My 'companions, for some reason or other, 'conjecturing that I was rich, and, by 'my enquiries and admiration, finding 'that I was ignorant, considered me as 'a novice whom they had a right to 'cheat, and who was to learn at the 'usual expence the art of fraud. They 'exposed me to the theft of servants, 'and the exaction of officers, and saw 'me plundered upon false pretences, 'without any advantage to themselves; 'but that of rejoicing in the superiority 'of their own knowledge.'

'Stop a moment,' said the prince: 'Is there such depravity in man, as 'that he should injure another without 'benefit to himself? I can easily con-'ceive that all are pleased with superi-'ority; but your ignorance was merely 'accidental, which being neither your 'crime nor your folly, could afford them 'no reason to applaud themselves; and 'the knowledge which they had, and 'which you wanted, they might as ef-'fectually have shewn by warning as 'betraying you.'

'Pride,' said Imlac, 'is seldom de-'licate, it will please itself with very 'mean advantages; and envy feels not 'it's own happiness, but when it may 'be compared with the misery of others. 'They were my enemies, because they 'grieved to think me rich; and my op-'pressors, because they delighted to find 'me weak.'

'Proceed,' said the prince: 'I doubt 'not of the facts which you relate, but 'imagine that you impute them to mis-'taken motives.'

'In this company,' said Imlac, 'I 'arrived at Agra, the capital of Indos-'tan, the city in which the Great Mogul

'commonly

'commonly resides. I applied myself 'to the language of the country, and 'in a few months was able to converse 'with the learned men; some of whom 'I found morose and reserved, and 'others easy and communicative; some 'were unwilling to teach another what 'they had with difficulty learned them-'selves; and some shewed that the end 'of their studies was to gain the dig-'nity of instructing.

'To the tutor of the young princes I 'recommended myself so much, that I 'was presented to the emperour as a 'man of uncommon knowledge. The 'emperour asked me many questions 'concerning my country and my tra-'vels; and though I cannot now recol-'lect any thing that he uttered above 'the power of a common man, he dis-'missed me astonished at his wisdom, 'and enamoured of his goodness.

'My credit was now so high, that the 'merchants, with whom I had travelled, 'applied to me for recommendations to 'the ladies of the court. I was sur-'prised at their confidence of solicita-'tion, and gently reproached them with 'their practices on the road. They heard 'me with cold indifference, and shewed 'no tokens of shame or sorrow.

'They then urged their request with 'the offer of a bribe; but what I would 'not do for kindness, I would not do for 'money; and refused them, not be-'cause they had injured me, but because 'I would not enable them to injure 'others; for I knew they would have 'made use of my credit to cheat those 'who should buy their wares.

'Having resided at Agra till there 'was no more to be learned, I travelled 'into Persia, where I saw many remains 'of ancient magnificence, and observed 'many new accommodations of life. 'The Persians are a nation eminently 'social, and their assemblies afforded me 'daily opportunities of remarking cha-'racters and manners, and of tracing 'human nature through all it's varia-'tions.

'From Persia I passed into Arabia, 'where I saw a nation at once pastoral 'and warlike; who live without any 'settled habitation; whose only wealth 'is their flocks and herds; and who 'have yet carried on, through all ages, 'an hereditary war with all mankind, 'though they neither covet nor envy 'their possessions.

CHAP. X.

IMLAC'S HISTORY CONTINUED. A DISSERTATION UPON POETRY.

'WHEREVER I went, I 'found that poetry was con-'sidered as the highest learning, and 'regarded with a veneration somewhat 'approaching to that which man would 'pay to the Angelick Nature. And yet 'it fills me with wonder, that, in almost 'all countries, the most ancient poets 'are considered as the best: whether it be 'that every other kind of knowledge is 'an acquisition gradually attained, and 'poetry is a gift conferred at once; or 'that the first poetry of every nation 'surprised them as a novelty, and re-'tained the credit by consent which it 'received by accident at first: or whe-'ther, as the province of poetry is to de-'scribe Nature and Passion, which are 'always the same, the first writers took 'possession of the most striking objects 'for description, and the most probable 'occurrences for fiction, and left no-'thing to those that followed them, but 'transcription of the same events, and 'new combinations of the same images. 'Whatever be the reason, it is common-'ly observed that the early writers are 'in possession of nature, and their fol-'lowers of art: that the first excel in 'strength and invention, and the latter 'in elegance and refinement.

'I was desirous to add my name to 'this illustrious fraternity. I read all 'the poets of Persia and Arabia, and 'was able to repeat by memory the vo-'lumes that are suspended in the mosque 'of Mecca. But I soon found that no 'man was ever great by imitation. My 'desire of excellence impelled me to 'transfer my attention to nature and to 'life. Nature was to be my subject, 'and men to be my auditors: I could 'never describe what I had not seen: I 'could not hope to move those with de-'light or terrour, whose interests and 'opinions I did not understand.

'Being now resolved to be a poet, 'I saw every thing with a new purpose; 'my sphere of attention was suddenly 'magnified: no kind of knowledge was 'to be overlooked. I ranged mountains 'and deserts for images and resem-'blances, and pictured upon my mind 'every tree of the forest and flower of

'the

'the valley. I observed with equal care 'the crags of the rock and the pinnacles 'of the palace. Sometimes I wandered 'along the mazes of the rivulet, and 'sometimes watched the changes of the 'summer clouds. To a poet nothing 'can be useless. Whatever is beautiful, 'and whatever is dreadful, must be familiar to his imagination: he must be 'conversant with all that is awfully vast 'or elegantly little. The plants of the 'garden, the animals of the wood, the 'minerals of the earth, and meteors of 'the sky, must all concur to store his 'mind with inexhaustible variety: for 'every idea is useful for the enforcement or decoration of moral or religious truth; and he, who knows most, 'will have most power of diversifying 'his scenes, and of gratifying his reader 'with remote allusions and unexpected 'instruction.

'All the appearances of nature I was 'therefore careful to study, and every 'country which I have surveyed has 'contributed something to my poetical 'powers.'

'In so wide a survey,' said the prince, 'you must surely have left much unobserved. I have lived, till now, within the circuit of these mountains, and 'yet cannot walk abroad without the 'sight of something which I had never 'beheld before, or never heeded.'

'The business of a poet,' said Imlac, 'is to examine, not the individual, but 'the species; to remark general properties and large appearances; he does 'not number the streaks of the tulip, 'or describe the different shades in the 'verdure of the forest. He is to exhibit in his portraits of nature such prominent and striking features, as recall 'the original to every mind; and must 'neglect the minuter discriminations, 'which one may have remarked, and 'another have neglected, for those characteristicks which are alike obvious to 'vigilance and carelessness.

'But the knowledge of nature is only 'half the task of a poet; he must be acquainted likewise with all the modes 'of life. His character requires that 'he estimate the happiness and misery of 'every condition; observe the power of 'all the passions in all their combinations, and trace the changes of the 'human mind as they are modified by 'various institutions and accidental influences of climate or custom, from 'the sprightliness of infancy to the despondence of decrepitude. He must 'divest himself of the prejudices of his 'age or country; he must consider right 'and wrong in their abstracted and invariable state; he must disregard present laws and opinions, and rise to general and transcendental truths, which 'will always be the same: he must 'therefore content himself with the slow 'progress of his name; contemn the applause of his own time, and commit 'his claims to the justice of posterity. 'He must write as the interpreter of nature, and the legislator of mankind, 'and consider himself as presiding over 'the thoughts and manners of future 'generations; as a being superior to 'time and place.

'His labour is not yet at an end: he 'must know many languages and many 'sciences; and, that his style may be 'worthy of his thoughts, must, by incessant practice, familiarize to himself 'every delicacy of speech and grace of 'harmony.'

CHAP. XI.

IMLAC'S NARRATIVE CONTINUED. A HINT ON PILGRIMAGE.

IMLAC now felt the enthusiastick fit, and was proceeding to aggrandize his own profession, when the prince cried out, 'Enough! thou hast convinced me, that no human being can 'ever be a poet. Proceed with thy narration.'

'To be a poet,' said Imlac, 'is indeed 'very difficult.'—'So difficult,' returned the prince, 'that I will at present 'hear no more of his labours. Tell me 'whither you went when you had seen 'Persia.'

'From Persia,' said the poet, 'I travelled through Syria, and for three 'years resided in Palestine, where I 'conversed with great numbers of the 'northern and western nations of Europe; the nations which are now in 'possession of all power and all knowledge; whose armies are irresistible, 'and whose fleets command the remotest parts of the globe. When I 'compared these men with the natives 'of our own kingdom and those that 'surround

'surround us, they appeared almost 'another order of beings. In their 'countries it is difficult to wish for any 'thing that may not be obtained: a 'thousand arts, of which we never 'heard, are continually labouring for 'their convenience and pleasure; and 'whatever their own climate has denied 'them is supplied by their commerce.'

'By what means,' said the prince, 'are the Europeans thus powerful, or 'why, since they can so easily visit Asia 'and Africa for trade or conquest, 'cannot the Asiaticks and Africans in-'vade their coasts, plant colonies in 'their ports, and give laws to their natu-'ral princes? The same wind that car-'ries them back would bring us thither.'

'They are more powerful, Sir, than 'we,' answered Imlac, 'because they 'are wiser; knowledge will always pre-'dominate over ignorance, as man go-'verns the other animals. But why their 'knowledge is more than ours, I know 'not what reason can be given, but 'the unsearchable will of the Supreme 'Being.'

'When,' said the prince with a sigh, 'shall I be able to visit Palestine, and 'mingle with this mighty confluence of 'nations? Till that happy moment 'shall arrive, let me fill up the time 'with such representations as thou canst 'give me. I am not ignorant of the 'motive that assembles such numbers 'in that place, and cannot but consider 'it as the centre of wisdom and piety, 'to which the best and wisest men of 'every land must be continually re-'sorting.'

'There are some nations,' said Im-'lac, 'that send few visitants to Pa-'lestine; for many numerous and learn-'ed sects in Europe concur to censure 'pilgrimage as superstitious, or deride 'it as ridiculous.'

'You know,' said the prince, 'how 'little my life has made me acquainted 'with diversity of opinions: it will 'be too long to hear the arguments 'on both sides; you, that have consi-'dered them, tell me the result.'

'Pilgrimage,' said Imlac, 'like 'many other acts of piety, may be rea-'sonable or superstitious, according to 'the principles upon which it is per-'formed. Long journies in search of 'truth are not commanded. Truth, 'such as is necessary to the regulation 'of life, is always found where it is 'honestly sought. Change of place is 'no natural cause of the increase of 'piety, for it inevitably produces dis-'sipation of mind. Yet, since men go 'every day to view the fields where 'great actions have been performed, 'and return with stronger impressions 'of the event, curiosity of the same 'kind may naturally dispose us to view 'that country whence our religion had 'it's beginning; and I believe no man 'surveys those awful scenes without 'some confirmation of holy resolutions. 'That the Supreme Being may be more 'easily propitiated in one place than in 'another, is the dream of idle superstiti-'on; but that some places may ope-'rate upon our own minds in an un-'common manner, is an opinion which 'hourly experience will justify. He 'who supposes that his vices may be 'more successfully combated in Pa-'lestine, will, perhaps, find himself 'mistaken, yet he may go thither with-'out folly: he who thinks they will be 'more freely pardoned, dishonours at 'once his reason and religion.'

'These,' said the prince, 'are Euro-'pean distinctions. I will consider them 'another time. What have you found 'to be the effect of knowledge? Are 'those nations happier than we?'

'There is so much infelicity,' said the poet, 'in the world, that scarce any 'man has leisure from his own distresses 'to estimate the comparative happiness 'of others. Knowledge is certainly 'one of the means of pleasure, as is 'confessed by the natural desire which 'every mind feels of increasing it's 'ideas. Ignorance is mere privation, 'by which nothing can be produced: 'it is a vacuity in which the soul sits 'motionless and torpid for want of at-'traction; and, without knowing why, 'we always rejoice when we learn, and 'grieve when we forget. I am there-'fore inclined to conclude, that if no-'thing counteracts the natural conse-'quence of learning, we grow more 'happy as our minds take a wider 'range.

'In enumerating the particular com-'forts of life we shall find many advan-'tages on the side of the Europeans. 'They cure wounds and diseases with 'which we languish and perish. We 'suffer inclemencies of weather which

'they can obviate. They have engines 'for the dispatch of many laborious 'works, which we must perform by 'manual industry. There is such com- 'munication between distant places, 'that one friend can hardly be said to 'be absent from another. Their policy 'removes all publick inconveniencies: 'they have roads cut through their 'mountains, and bridges laid upon their 'rivers. And, if we descend to the 'privacies of life, their habitations are 'more commodious, and their possessions 'are more secure.'

'They are surely happy,' said the prince, 'who have all these conveniencies, of which I envy none so much as 'the facility with which separated friends 'interchange their thoughts.'

'The Europeans,' answered Imlac, 'are less unhappy than we, but they are 'not happy. Human life is every where 'a state in which much is to be endured, 'and little to be enjoyed.'

CHAP. XII.

THE STORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

'I Am not yet willing,' said the prince, 'to suppose that happiness is so parsimoniously distributed to mortals; nor 'can I believe but that, if I had the choice 'of life, I should be able to fill every 'day with pleasure. I would injure no 'man, and should provoke no resentment: I would relieve every distress, 'and should enjoy the benedictions of 'gratitude. I would chuse my friends 'among the wise, and my wife among 'the virtuous; and therefore should 'be in no danger from treachery or unkindness. My children should, by 'my care, be learned and pious, and 'would repay to my age what their 'childhood had received. What would 'dare to molest him who might call on 'every side to thousands enriched by his 'bounty, or assisted by his power? 'And why should not life glide quietly 'away in the soft reciprocation of protection and reverence? All this may 'be done without the help of European 'refinements, which appear by their 'effects to be rather specious than useful. Let us leave them, and pursue 'our journey.'

'From Palestine,' said Imlac, 'I 'passed through many regions of Asia; 'in the more civilized kingdoms as a 'trader, and among the Barbarians of 'the mountains as a pilgrim. At last 'I began to long for my native country, 'that I might repose, after my travels 'and fatigues, in the places where I 'had spent my earliest years, and gladden my old companions with the recital of my adventures. Often did I 'figure to myself those with whom I 'had sported away the gay hours of 'dawning life, sitting round me in it's 'evening, wondering at my tales, and 'listening to my counsels.

'When this thought had taken possession of my mind, I considered every 'moment as wasted which did not bring 'me nearer to Abissinia. I hastened 'into Egypt, and notwithstanding my 'impatience, was detained ten months 'in the contemplation of it's ancient 'magnificence, and in enquiries after 'the remains of it's ancient learning. I 'found in Cairo a mixture of all nations; some brought thither by the love 'of knowledge, some by the hope of 'gain, and many by the desire of living 'after their own manner without observation, and of lying hid in the obscurity of multitudes: for in a city, 'populous as Cairo, it is possible to obtain at the same time the gratifications of society, and the secrecy of solitude.

'From Cairo I travelled to Suez, 'and embarked on the Red Sea, passing 'along the coast till I arrived at the 'port from which I had departed twenty 'years before. Here I joined myself 'to a caravan, and re-entered my native 'country.

'I now expected the caresses of my 'kinsmen, and the congratulations of 'my friends, and was not without hope 'that my father, whatever value he had 'set upon riches, would own with gladness and pride a son who was able to 'add to the felicity and honour of the 'nation. But I was soon convinced 'that my thoughts were vain. My father had been dead fourteen years, 'having divided his wealth among my 'brothers, who were removed to some 'other provinces. Of my companions 'the greater part was in the grave; of 'the rest, some could with difficulty 'remember me, and some considered 'me as one corrupted by foreign manners.

'A man used to vicissitudes is not 'easily

'easily dejected. I forgot, after a time, 'my disappointment, and endeavoured 'to recommend myself to the nobles of 'the kingdom; they admitted me to their 'tables, heard my story, and dismissed 'me. I opened a school, and was pro- 'hibited to teach. I then resolved to 'sit down in the quiet of domestick life, 'and addressed a lady that was fond of 'my conversation, but rejected my suit, 'because my father was a merchant.

'Wearied at last with solicitation and 'repulses, I resolved to hide myself for 'ever from the world, and depend no 'longer on the opinion or caprice of 'others. I waited for the time when the 'gate of the *happy valley* should open, 'that I might bid farewell to hope and 'fear: the day came; my performance 'was distinguished with favour, and I 'resigned myself with joy to perpetual 'confinement.'

'Hast thou here found happiness at 'last?' said Rasselas. 'Tell me with- 'out reserve; art thou content with thy 'condition? or, dost thou wish to be 'again wandering and enquiring? All 'the inhabitants of this valley celebrate 'their lot, and at the annual visit of the 'emperour, invite others to partake of 'their felicity.'

'Great prince,' said Imlac, 'I shall 'speak the truth; I know not one of all 'your attendants who does not lament 'the hour when he entered this retreat. 'I am less unhappy than the rest, be- 'cause I have a mind replete with 'images, which I can vary and combine 'at pleasure. I can amuse my solitude 'by the renovation of the knowledge 'which begins to fade from my memory, 'and by recollection of the accidents of 'my past life. Yet all this ends in the 'sorrowful confideration, that my ac- 'quirements are now useless, and that 'none of my pleasures can be again en- 'joyed. The rest, whose minds have 'no impression but of the present mo- 'ment, are either corroded by malig- 'nant passions, or sit stupid in the gloom 'of perpetual vacancy.'

'What passions can infest those,' said the prince, 'who have no rivals? 'We are in a place where impotence 'precludes malice, and where all envy 'is repressed by community of enjoy- 'ments.'

'There may be community,' said Imlac, 'of material possessions, but 'there can never be community of love 'or of esteem. It must happen that 'one will please more than another; he 'that knows himself despised will always 'be envious; and still more envious and 'malevolent, if he is condemned to live 'in the presence of those who despise 'him. The invitations, by which they 'allure others to a state which they feel 'to be wretched, proceed from the na- 'tural malignity of hopeless misery. 'They are weary of themselves, and of 'each other, and expect to find relief in 'new companions. They envy the li- 'berty which their folly has forfeited, 'and would gladly see all mankind im- 'prisoned like themselves.

'From this crime, however, I am 'wholly free. No man can say that he 'is wretched by my persuasion. I look 'with pity on the crowds who are an- 'nually soliciting admission to captivity, 'and wish that it were lawful for me to 'warn them of their danger.'

'My dear Imlac,' said the prince, 'I will open to thee my whole heart. I 'have long meditated an escape from the 'happy valley. I have examined the 'mountains on every side, but find my- 'self insuperably barred: teach me the 'way to break my prison; thou shalt 'be the companion of my flight, the 'guide of my rambles, the partner of 'my fortune, and my sole director in 'the *choice of life*.'

'Sir,' answered the poet, 'your es- 'cape will be difficult, and, perhaps, 'you may soon repent your curiosity. 'The world, which you figure to your- 'self smooth and quiet as the lake in 'the valley, you will find a sea foaming 'with tempests, and boiling with whirl- 'pools: you will be sometimes over- 'whelmed by the waves of violence, and 'sometimes dashed against the rocks of 'treachery. Amidst wrongs and frauds, 'competitions and anxieties, you will 'wish a thousand times for these seats of 'quiet, and willingly quit hope to be 'free from fear.'

'Do not seek to deter me from my 'purpose,' said the prince: 'I am im- 'patient to see what thou hast seen; and, 'since thou art thyself weary of the val- 'ley, it is evident, that thy former state 'was better than this. Whatever be the 'consequence of my experiment, I am 'resolved to judge with mine own eyes 'of the various conditions of men, and

'then to make deliberately my *choice of life*.'

'I am afraid,' said Imlac, 'you are 'hindered by ſtronger reſtraints than my 'perſuaſions; yet, if your determination 'is fixed, I do not counſel you to de- 'ſpair. Few things are impoſſible to 'diligence and ſkill.'

CHAP. XIII.

RASSELAS DISCOVERS THE MEANS OF ESCAPE.

THE prince now diſmiſſed his favourite to reſt, but the narrative of wonders and novelties filled his mind with perturbation. He revolved all that he had heard, and prepared innumerable queſtions for the morning.

Much of his uneaſineſs was now removed. He had a friend to whom he could impart his thoughts, and whoſe experience could aſſiſt him in his deſigns. His heart was no longer condemned to ſwell with ſilent vexation. He thought that even the *happy valley* might be endured with ſuch a companion, and that if they could range the world together, he ſhould have nothing further to deſire.

In a few days the water was diſcharged, and the ground dried. The prince and Imlac then walked out together to converſe without the notice of the reſt. The prince, whoſe thoughts were always on the wing, as he paſſed by the gate, ſaid, with a countenance of ſorrow, 'Why art thou ſo ſtrong, and why 'is man ſo weak?'

'Man is not weak,' anſwered his companion; 'knowledge is more than 'equivalent to force. The maſter of 'mechanicks laughs at ſtrength. I can 'burſt the gate, but cannot do it ſe- 'cretly. Some other expedient muſt be 'tried.'

As they were walking on the ſide of the mountain, they obſerved that the conies, which the rain had driven from their burrows, had taken ſhelter among the buſhes, and formed holes behind them, tending upwards in an oblique line. 'It has been the opinion of an- 'tiquity,' ſaid Imlac, 'that human rea- 'ſon borrowed many arts from the in- 'ſtinct of animals; let us, therefore, not 'think ourſelves degraded by learning 'from the coney. We may eſcape by 'piercing the mountain in the ſame di- 'rection. We will begin where the ſum- 'mit hangs over the middle part, and 'labour upward till we ſhall iſſue up be- 'yond the prominence.'

The eyes of the prince, when he heard this propoſal, ſparkled with joy. The execution was eaſy, and the ſucceſs certain.

No time was now loſt. They haſtened early in the morning to chuſe a place proper for their mine. They clambered with great fatigue among crags and brambles, and returned without having diſcovered any part that favoured their deſign. The ſecond and the third day were ſpent in the ſame manner and with the ſame fruſtration. But, on the fourth, they found a ſmall cavern, concealed by a thicket, where they reſolved to make their experiment.

Imlac procured inſtruments proper to hew ſtone and remove earth, and they fell to their work on the next day with more eagerneſs than vigour. They were preſently exhauſted by their efforts, and ſat down to pant upon the graſs. The prince, for a moment, appeared to be diſcouraged. 'Sir,' ſaid his companion, 'practice will enable us to con- 'tinue our labour for a longer time; 'mark, however, how far we have ad- 'vanced, and you will find that our toil 'will ſome time have an end. Great 'works are performed, not by ſtrength, 'but perſeverance: yonder palace was 'raiſed by ſingle ſtones, yet you ſee it's 'height and ſpaciouſneſs. He that ſhall 'walk with vigour three hours a day, 'will paſs in ſeven years a ſpace equal 'to the circumference of the globe.'

They returned to their work day after day, and, in a ſhort time, found a fiſſure in the rock, which enabled them to paſs far with very little obſtruction. This Raſſelas conſidered as a good omen. 'Do not diſturb your mind,' ſaid Imlac, 'with other hopes or fears than 'reaſon may ſuggeſt: if you are pleaſed 'with prognoſticks of good, you will 'be terrified likewiſe with tokens of 'evil, and your whole life will be a 'prey to ſuperſtition. Whatever faci- 'litates our work is more than an omen, 'it is a cauſe of ſucceſs. This is one 'of thoſe pleaſing ſurpriſes which often 'happen to active reſolution. Many 'things difficult to deſign prove eaſy to 'performance.'

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

RASSELAS AND IMLAC RECEIVE AN UNEXPECTED VISIT.

THEY had now wrought their way to the middle, and solaced their toil with the approach of liberty, when the prince, coming down to refresh himself with air, found his sister Nekayah standing before the mouth of the cavity. He started and stood confused, afraid to tell his design, and yet hopeless to conceal it. A few moments determined him to repose on her fidelity, and secure her secrecy by a declaration without reserve.

'Do not imagine,' said the princess, 'that I came hither as a spy: I had long 'observed from my window, that you 'and Imlac directed your walk every 'day towards the same point, but I did 'not suppose you had any better reason 'for the preference than a cooler shade, 'or more fragrant bank; nor followed 'you with any other design than to partake of your conversation. Since then 'not suspicion but fondness has detected 'you, let me not lose the advantage of 'my discovery. I am equally weary of 'confinement with yourself, and not less 'desirous of knowing what is done or 'suffered in the world. Permit me to 'fly with you from this tasteless tranquillity, which will yet grow more 'loathsome when you have left me. 'You may deny me to accompany you, 'but cannot hinder me from following.'

The prince, who loved Nekayah above his other sisters, had no inclination to refuse her request, and grieved that he had lost an opportunity of shewing his confidence by a voluntary communication. It was therefore agreed that she should leave the valley with them; and that, in the mean time, she should watch, lest any other straggler should, by chance or curiosity, follow them to the mountain.

At length their labour was at an end; they saw light beyond the prominence, and, issuing to the top of the mountain, beheld the Nile, yet a narrow current, wandering beneath them.

The prince looked round with rapture, anticipated all the pleasures of travel, and in thought was already transported beyond his father's dominions. Imlac, though very joyful at his escape, had less expectation of pleasure in the world, which he had before tried, and of which he had been weary.

Rasselas was so much delighted with a wider horizon, that he could not soon be persuaded to return into the valley. He informed his sister that the way was open, and that nothing now remained but to prepare for their departure.

CHAP. XV.

THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS LEAVE THE VALLEY, AND SEE MANY WONDERS.

THE prince and princess had jewels sufficient to make them rich whenever they came into a place of commerce, which, by Imlac's direction, they hid in their clothes, and, on the night of the next full moon, all left the valley. The princess was followed only by a single favourite, who did not know whither she was going.

They clambered through the cavity, and began to go down on the other side. The princess and her maid turned their eyes towards every part, and, seeing nothing to bound their prospect, considered themselves as in danger of being lost in a dreary vacuity. They stopped and trembled. 'I am almost afraid,' said the princess, 'to begin a journey of 'which I cannot perceive an end, and 'to venture into this immense plain, 'where I may be approached on every 'side by men whom I never saw.' The prince felt nearly the same emotions, though he thought it more manly to conceal them.

Imlac smiled at their terrours, and encouraged them to proceed; but the princess continued irresolute till she had been imperceptibly drawn forward too far to return.

In the morning they found some shepherds in the field, who set milk and fruits before them. The princess wondered that she did not see a palace ready for her reception, and a table spread with delicacies; but, being faint and hungry, she drank the milk and eat the fruits, and thought them of a higher flavour than the products of the valley.

They travelled forward by easy journies, being all unaccustomed to toil or difficulty, and knowing, that though they might be missed, they could not be pursued. In a few days they came into

into a more populous region, where Imlac was diverted with the admiration which his companions expreſſed at the diverſity of manners, ſtations, and employments.

Their dreſs was ſuch as might not bring upon them the ſuſpicion of having any thing to conceal; yet the prince, wherever he came, expected to be obeyed, and the princeſs was frighted, becauſe thoſe that came into her preſence did not proſtrate themſelves before her. Imlac was forced to obſerve them with great vigilance, leſt they ſhould betray their rank by their unuſual behaviour, and detained them ſeveral weeks in the firſt village, to accuſtom them to the ſight of common mortals.

By degrees the royal wanderers were taught to underſtand that they had for a time laid aſide their dignity, and were to expect only ſuch regard as liberality and courteſy could procure. And Imlac, having, by many admonitions, prepared them to endure the tumults of a port, and the ruggedneſs of the commercial race, brought them down to the ſea-coaſt.

The prince and his ſiſter, to whom every thing was new, were gratified equally at all places, and therefore remained for ſome months at the port without any inclination to paſs further. Imlac was content with their ſtay, becauſe he did not think it ſafe to expoſe them, unpractiſed in the world, to the hazards of a foreign country.

At laſt he began to fear leſt they ſhould be diſcovered, and propoſed to fix a day for their departure. They had no pretenſions to judge for themſelves, and referred the whole ſcheme to his direction. He therefore took paſſage in a ſhip to Suez; and, when the time came, with great difficulty prevailed on the princeſs to enter the veſſel. They had a quick and proſperous voyage, and from Suez travelled by land to Cairo.

CHAP. XVI.

THEY ENTER CAIRO, AND FIND EVERY MAN HAPPY.

AS they approached the city, which filled the ſtrangers with aſtoniſhment, 'This,' ſaid Imlac to the prince, 'is the place where travellers and merchants aſſemble from all the corners of the earth. You will here find men of every character, and every occupation. Commerce is here honourable: I will act as a merchant, and you ſhall live as ſtrangers, who have no other end of travel than curioſity; it will ſoon be obſerved that we are rich; our reputation will procure us acceſs to all whom we ſhall deſire to know; you will ſee all the conditions of humanity, and enable yourſelf at leiſure to make your *choice of life*.'

They now entered the town, ſtunned by the noiſe, and offended by the crowds. Inſtruction had not yet ſo prevailed over habit, but that they wondered to ſee themſelves paſs undiſtinguiſhed along the ſtreet, and met by the loweſt of the people without reverence or notice. The princeſs could not at firſt bear the thought of being levelled with the vulgar, and, for ſome days, continued in her chamber, where ſhe was ſerved by her favourite Pekuah as in the palace of the valley.

Imlac, who underſtood traffick, ſold part of the jewels the next day, and hired a houſe, which he adorned with ſuch magnificence, that he was immediately conſidered as a merchant of great wealth. His politeneſs attracted many acquaintance, and his generoſity made him courted by many dependants. His table was crouded by men of every nation, who all admired his knowledge, and ſolicited his favour. His companions, not being able to mix in the converſation, could make no diſcovery of their ignorance or ſurpriſe, and were gradually initiated in the world as they gained knowledge of the language.

The prince had, by frequent lectures, been taught the uſe and nature of money; but the ladies could not, for a long time, comprehend what the merchants did with ſmall pieces of gold and ſilver, or why things of ſo little uſe ſhould be received as equivalent to the neceſſaries of life.

They ſtudied the language two years, while Imlac was preparing to ſet before them the various ranks and conditions of mankind. He grew acquainted with all who had any thing uncommon in their fortune or conduct. He frequented the voluptuous and the frugal, the idle and the buſy, the merchants and the men of learning.

The

The prince being now able to converse with fluency, and having learned the caution necessary to be observed in his intercourse with strangers, began to accompany Imlac to places of resort, and to enter into all assemblies, that he might make his *choice of life*.

For some time he thought choice needless, because all appeared to him equally happy. Wherever he went he met gaiety and kindness, and heard the song of joy or the laugh of carelessness. He began to believe that the world overflowed with universal plenty, and that nothing was withheld either from want or merit; that every hand showered liberality, and every heart melted with benevolence: 'and who then,' says he, 'will be suffered to be wretched?'

Imlac permitted the pleasing delusion, and was unwilling to crush the hope of inexperience, till one day, having sat a while silent, 'I know not,' said the prince, 'what can be the reason that I 'am more unhappy than any of our 'friends. I see them perpetually and 'unalterably cheerful, but feel my own 'mind restless and uneasy. I am unsatisfied with those pleasures which I 'seem most to court, I live in the crowds 'of jollity, not so much to enjoy company as to shun myself, and am only 'loud and merry to conceal my sadness.'

'Every man,' said Imlac, 'may, by 'examining his own mind, guess what 'passes in the minds of others: when 'you feel that your own gaiety is counterfeit, it may justly lead you to suspect that of your companions not to 'be sincere. Envy is commonly reciprocal. We are long before we are 'convinced that happiness is never to be 'found, and each believes it possessed 'by others, to keep alive the hope of 'obtaining it for himself. In the assembly, where you passed the last night, 'there appeared such sprightliness of air, 'and volatility of fancy, as might have 'suited beings of an higher order, formed to inhabit serener regions, inaccessible to care or sorrow: yet, believe 'me, prince, there was not one who 'did not dread the moment when solitude should deliver him to the tyranny 'of reflection.'

'This,' said the prince, 'may be true 'of others, since it is true of me; yet, 'whatever be the general infelicity of 'man, one condition is more happy than 'another, and wisdom surely directs us 'to take the least evil in the *choice of* 'life.'

'The causes of good and evil,' answered Imlac, 'are so various and uncertain, so often entangled with each 'other, so diversified by various relations, and so much subject to accidents 'which cannot be foreseen, that he who 'would fix his condition upon incontestible reasons of preference, must 'live and die enquiring and deliberating.'

'But surely,' said Rasselas, 'the wise 'men, to whom we listen with reverence and wonder, chose that mode 'of life for themselves which they 'thought most likely to make them 'happy.'

'Very few,' said the poet, 'live by 'choice. Every man is placed in his 'present condition by causes which 'acted without his foresight, and with 'which he did not always willingly co-operate; and therefore you will rarely 'meet one who does not think the lot of 'his neighbour better than his own.'

'I am pleased to think,' said the prince, 'that my birth has given me at 'least one advantage over others, by enabling me to determine for myself. I 'have here the world before me; I will 'review it at leisure: surely happiness is 'somewhere to be found.'

CHAP. XVII.

THE PRINCE ASSOCIATES WITH YOUNG MEN OF SPIRIT AND GAIETY.

RASSELAS rose next day, and resolved to begin his experiments upon life. 'Youth,' cried he, 'is the 'time of gladness: I will join myself to 'the young men, whose only business is 'to gratify their desires, and whose time 'is all spent in a succession of enjoyments.'

To such societies he was readily admitted, but a few days brought him back weary and disgusted. Their mirth was without images; their laughter without motive; their pleasures were gross and sensual, in which the mind had no part; their conduct was at once wild and mean; they laughed at order and at law, but

but the frown of power dejected, and the eye of wisdom abashed them.

The prince soon concluded, that he should never be happy in a course of life of which he was ashamed. He thought it unsuitable to a reasonable being to act without a plan, and to be sad or cheerful only by chance. 'Happiness,' said he, 'must be something solid and permanent, without fear and without uncertainty.'

But his young companions had gained so much of his regard by their frankness and courtesy, that he could not leave them without warning and remonstrance. 'My friends,' said he, 'I have seriously considered our manners and our prospects, and find that we have mistaken our own interest. The first years of man must make provision for the last. He that never thinks never can be wise. Perpetual levity must end in ignorance; and intemperance, though it may fire the spirits for an hour, will make life short or miserable. Let us consider that youth is of no long duration, and that in maturer age, when the enchantments of fancy shall cease, and phantoms of delight dance no more about us, we shall have no comforts but the esteem of wise men, and the means of doing good. Let us, therefore, stop, while to stop is in our power: let us live as men who are some time to grow old, and to whom it will be the most dreadful of all evils not to count their past years by follies, and to be reminded of their former luxuriance of health only by the maladies which riot has produced.'

They stared a while in silence one upon another, and at last drove him away by a general chorus of continued laughter.

The consciousness that his sentiments were just, and his intentions kind, was scarcely sufficient to support him against the horror of derision. But he recovered his tranquillity, and persued his search.

CHAP. XVIII.

THE PRINCE FINDS A WISE AND HAPPY MAN.

As he was one day walking in the street, he saw a spacious building which all were, by the open doors, invited to enter: he followed the stream of people, and found it a hall or school of declamation, in which professors read lectures to their auditory. He fixed his eye upon a sage raised above the rest, who discoursed with great energy on the government of the passions. His look was venerable, his action graceful, his pronunciation clear, and his diction elegant. He shewed, with great strength of sentiment, and variety of illustration, that human nature is degraded and debased, when the lower faculties predominate over the higher; that when fancy, the parent of passion, usurps the dominion of the mind, nothing ensues but the natural effect of unlawful government, perturbation and confusion; that she betrays the fortresses of the intellect to rebels, and excites her children to sedition against reason their lawful sovereign. He compared reason to the sun, of which the light is constant, uniform, and lasting; and fancy to a meteor, of bright but transitory lustre, irregular in it's motion, and delusive in it's direction.

He then communicated the various precepts given from time to time for the conquest of passion, and displayed the happiness of those who had obtained the important victory, after which man is no longer the slave of fear, nor the fool of hope; is no more emaciated by envy, inflamed by anger, emasculated by tenderness, or depressed by grief; but walks on calmly through the tumults or privacies of life, as the sun persues alike his course through the calm or the stormy sky.

He enumerated many examples of heroes immovable by pain or pleasure, who looked with indifference on those modes or accidents to which the vulgar give the names of good and evil. He exhorted his hearers to lay aside their prejudices, and arm themselves against the shafts of malice or misfortune, by invulnerable patience; concluding, that this state only was happiness, and that this happiness was in every one's power.

Rasselas listened to him with the veneration due to the instructions of a superiour being, and, waiting for him at the door, humbly implored the liberty of visiting so great a master of true wisdom. The lecturer hesitated a moment, when Rasselas put a purse of gold into his hand, which he received with a mixture of joy and wonder.

'I have found,' said the prince, at his return

return to Imlac, 'a man who can teach 'all that is necessary to be known, who, 'from the unshaken throne of rational 'fortitude, looks down on the scenes 'of life changing beneath him. He 'speaks, and attention watches his lips. 'He reasons, and conviction closes his 'periods. This man shall be my fu-'ture guide: I will learn his doctrines, 'and imitate his life.'

'Be not too hasty,' said Imlac, 'to 'trust, or to admire, the teachers of mo-'rality: they discourse like angels, but 'they live like men.'

Rasselas, who could not conceive how any man could reason so forcibly without feeling the cogency of his own arguments, paid his visit in a few days, and was denied admission. He had now learned the power of money, and made his way by a piece of gold to the inner apartment, where he found the philosopher in a room half darkened, with his eyes misty, and his face pale. 'Sir,' said he, 'you are come at a time when 'all human friendship is useless; what I 'suffer cannot be remedied, what I have 'lost cannot be supplied. My daughter, 'my only daughter, from whose tender-'ness I expected all the comforts of my 'age, died last night of a fever. My 'views, my purposes, my hopes, are at 'an end: I am now a lonely being dis-'united from society.'

'Sir,' said the prince, 'mortality is 'an event by which a wise man can ne-'ver be surprised: we know that death 'is always near, and it should there-'fore always be expected.'—'Young 'man,' answered the philosopher, 'you 'speak like one that has never felt the 'pangs of separation.'—'Have you 'then forgot the precepts,' said Rasse-las, 'which you so powerfully enforced? 'Has wisdom no strength to arm the 'heart against calamity? Consider, that 'external things are naturally variable, 'but truth and reason are always the 'same.'—'What comfort,' said the mourner, 'can truth and reason afford 'me? of what effect are they now, but 'to tell me, that my daughter will not 'be restored?'

The prince, whose humanity would not suffer him to insult misery with reproof, went away convinced of the emptiness of rhetorical sound, and the inefficacy of polished periods and studied sentences.

CHAP. XIX.

A GLIMPSE OF PASTORAL LIFE.

He was still eager upon the same enquiry; and having heard of a hermit, that lived near the lowest cataract of the Nile, and filled the whole country with the fame of his sanctity, resolved to visit his retreat, and enquire whether that felicity, which publick life could not afford, was to be found in solitude; and whether a man, whose age and virtue made him venerable, could teach any peculiar art of shunning evils, or enduring them?

Imlac and the princess agreed to accompany him, and, after the necessary preparations, they began their journey. Their way lay through the fields, where shepherds tended their flocks, and the lambs were playing upon the pasture. 'This,' said the poet, 'is the life 'which has been often celebrated for 'it's innocence and quiet; let us pass 'the heat of the day among the shep-'herds tents, and know whether all our 'searches are not to terminate in pastoral 'simplicity.'

The proposal pleased them, and they induced the shepherds, by small presents and familiar questions, to tell their opinion of their own state: they were so rude and ignorant, so little able to compare the good with the evil of the occupation, and so indistinct in their narratives and descriptions, that very little could be learned from them. But it was evident that their hearts were cankered with discontent; that they considered themselves as condemned to labour for the luxury of the rich, and looked up with stupid malevolence toward those that were placed above them.

The princess pronounced with vehemence, that she would never suffer these envious savages to be her companions, and that she should not soon be desirous of seeing any more specimens of rustick happiness; but could not believe that all the accounts of primeval pleasures were fabulous, and was yet in doubt, whether life had any thing that could be justly preferred to the placid gratifications of fields and woods. She hoped that the time would come, when, with a few virtuous and elegant companions, she should gather flowers planted by her own hand,

fondle the lambs of her own ewe, and liſten, without care, among brooks and breezes, to one of her maidens reading in the ſhade.

CHAP. XX.

THE DANGER OF PROSPERITY.

ON the next day they continued their journey, till the heat compelled them to look round for ſhelter. At a ſmall diſtance they ſaw a thick wood, which they no ſooner entered than they perceived that they were approaching the habitations of men. The ſhrubs were diligently cut away to open walks where the ſhades were darkeſt; the boughs of oppoſite trees were artificially interwoven; ſeats of flowery turf were raiſed in vacant ſpaces; and a rivulet, that wantoned along the ſide of a winding path, had it's banks ſometimes opened into ſmall baſons, and it's ſtream ſometimes obſtructed by little mounds of ſtone heaped together to increaſe it's murmurs.

They paſſed ſlowly through the wood, delighted with ſuch unexpected accommodations, and entertained each other with conjecturing what, or who, he could be, that, in thoſe rude and unfrequented regions, had leiſure and art for ſuch harmleſs luxury.

As they advanced they heard the ſound of muſick, and ſaw youths and virgins dancing in the grove; and, going ſtill further, beheld a ſtately palace built upon a hill ſurrounded with woods. The laws of eaſtern hoſpitality allowed them to enter, and the maſter welcomed them like a man liberal and wealthy.

He was ſkilful enough in appearances ſoon to diſcern that they were no common gueſts, and ſpread his table with magnificence. The eloquence of Imlac caught his attention, and the lofty courteſy of the princeſs excited his reſpect. When they offered to depart he entreated their ſtay, and was the next day ſtill more unwilling to diſmiſs them than before. They were eaſily perſuaded to ſtop, and civility grew up in time to freedom and confidence.

The prince now ſaw all the domeſticks cheerful, and all the face of nature ſmiling round the place, and could not forbear to hope that he ſhould find here what he was ſeeking; but when he was congratulating the maſter upon his poſſeſſions, he anſwered with a ſigh, 'My 'condition has indeed the appearance of 'happineſs, but appearances are deluſive. My proſperity puts my life in 'danger; the Baſſa of Egypt is my 'enemy, incenſed only by my wealth 'and popularity. I have been hitherto 'protected againſt him by the princes 'of the country; but, as the favour of 'the great is uncertain, I know not 'how ſoon my defenders may be perſuaded to ſhare the plunder with the 'Baſſa. I have ſent my treaſures into 'a diſtant country, and, upon the firſt 'alarm, am prepared to follow them. 'Then will my enemies riot in my 'manſion, and enjoy the gardens which 'I have planted.'

They all joined in lamenting his danger, and deprecating his exile: and the princeſs was ſo much diſturbed with the tumult of grief and indignation, that ſhe retired to her apartment. They continued with their kind inviter a few days longer, and then went forward to find the hermit.

CHAP. XXI.

THE HAPPINESS OF SOLITUDE. THE HERMIT'S HISTORY.

THEY came on the third day, by the direction of the peaſants, to the hermit's cell: it was a cavern in the ſide of a mountain, over-ſhadowed with palm-trees; at ſuch a diſtance from the cataract, that nothing more was heard than a gentle uniform murmur, ſuch as compoſed the mind to penſive meditation, eſpecially when it was aſſiſted by the wind whiſtling among the branches. The firſt rude eſſay of nature had been ſo much improved by human labour, that the cave contained ſeveral apartments appropriated to different uſes, and often afforded lodging to travellers, whom darkneſs or tempeſts happened to overtake.

The hermit ſat on a bench at the door, to enjoy the coolneſs of the evening. On one ſide lay a book with pens and papers, on the other mechanical inſtruments of various kinds. As they approached him unregarded, the princeſs obſerved that he had not the countenance of a man that had found, or could teach the way to happineſs.

They

They saluted him with great respect, which he repaid like a man not unaccustomed to the forms of courts. 'My children,' said he, 'if you have lost your way, you shall be willingly supplied with such conveniencies for the night as this cavern will afford. I have all that nature requires, and you will not expect delicacies in a hermit's cell.'

They thanked him, and, entering, were pleased with the neatness and regularity of the place. The hermit set flesh and wine before them, though he fed only upon fruits and water. His discourse was cheerful without levity, and pious without enthusiasm. He soon gained the esteem of his guests, and the princess repented of her hasty censure.

At last Imlac began thus: 'I do not now wonder that your reputation is so far extended; we have heard at Cairo of your wisdom, and came hither to implore your direction for this young man and maiden in the *choice of life*.'

'To him that lives well,' answered the hermit, 'every form of life is good; nor can I give any other rule for choice, than to remove from all apparent evil.'

'He will remove most certainly from evil,' said the prince, 'who shall devote himself to that solitude which you have recommended by your example.'

'I have indeed lived fifteen years in solitude,' said the hermit, 'but have no desire that my example should gain any imitators. In my youth I professed arms, and was raised by degrees to the highest military rank. I have traversed wide countries at the head of my troops, and seen many battles and sieges. At last, being disgusted by the preferments of a younger officer, and feeling that my vigour was beginning to decay, I resolved to close my life in peace, having found the world full of snares, discord, and misery. I had once escaped from the pursuit of the enemy by the shelter of this cavern, and therefore chose it for my final residence. I employed artificers to form it into chambers, and stored it with all that I was likely to want.

'For some time after my retreat, I rejoiced like a tempest-beaten sailor at his entrance into the harbour, being delighted with the sudden change of the noise and hurry of war to stillness and repose. When the pleasure of novelty went away, I employed my hours in examining the plants which grow in the valley, and the minerals which I collected from the rocks. But that enquiry is now grown tasteless and irksome. I have been for some time unsettled and distracted: my mind is disturbed with a thousand perplexities of doubt, and vanities of imagination, which hourly prevail upon me, because I have no opportunities of relaxation or diversion. I am sometimes ashamed to think that I could not secure myself from vice, but by retiring from the exercise of virtue, and begin to suspect that I was rather impelled by resentment, than led by devotion, into solitude. My fancy riots in scenes of folly, and I lament that I have lost so much, and have gained so little. In solitude, if I escape the example of bad men, I want likewise the counsel and conversation of the good. I have been long comparing the evils with the advantages of society, and resolve to return into the world to-morrow. The life of a solitary man will be certainly miserable, but not certainly devout.'

They heard his resolution with surprize, but after a short pause, offered to conduct him to Cairo. He dug up a considerable treasure which he had hid among the rocks, and accompanied them to the city, on which, as he approached it, he gazed with rapture.

CHAP. XXII.

THE HAPPINESS OF A LIFE LED ACCORDING TO NATURE.

RASSELAS went often to an assembly of learned men, who met at stated times to unbend their minds, and compare their opinions. Their manners were somewhat coarse, but their conversation was instructive, and their disputations acute, though sometimes too violent, and often continued till neither controvertist remembered upon what question they began. Some faults were almost general among them: every one was desirous to dictate to the rest, and every one was pleased to hear the genius or knowledge of another depreciated.

In this assembly Rasselas was relating his interview with the hermit, and the wonder with which he heard him censure a course of life which he had so deliberately chosen, and so laudably followed. The sentiments of the hearers were various. Some were of opinion, that the folly of his choice had been justly punished by condemnation to perpetual perseverance. One of the youngest among them, with great vehemence, pronounced him an hypocrite. Some talked of the right of society to the labour of individuals, and considered retirement as a desertion of duty. Others readily allowed that there was a time when the claims of the publick were satisfied; and when a man might properly sequester himself, to review his life, and purify his heart.

One, who appeared more affected with the narrative than the rest, thought it likely, that the hermit would, in a few years, go back to his retreat, and, perhaps, if shame did not restrain, or death intercept him, return once more from his retreat into the world: 'For 'the hope of happiness,' said he 'is so 'strongly impressed, that the longest experience is not able to efface it. Of 'the present state, whatever it be, we 'feel, and are forced to confess, the 'misery; yet, when the same state is 'again at a distance, imagination paints 'is as desirable. But the time will 'surely come, when desire will be no 'longer our torment, and no man shall 'be wretched but by his own fault.'

'This,' said a philosopher, who had heard him with tokens of great impatience, 'is the present condition of a 'wise man. The time is already come, 'when none are wretched but by their 'own fault. Nothing is more idle, than 'to enquire after happiness, which nature has kindly placed within our 'reach. The way to be happy is to 'live according to nature, in obedience 'to that universal and unalterable law 'with which every heart is originally 'impressed; which is not written on it 'by precept, but engraven by destiny, 'not instilled by education, but infused 'at our nativity. He that lives according to nature will suffer nothing from 'the delusions of hope, or importunities of desire: he will receive and reject 'with equability of temper; and act or 'suffer as the reason of things shall 'alternately prescribe. Other men 'may amuse themselves with subtle definitions, or intricate ratiocinations. 'Let them learn to be wise by easier 'means: let them observe the hind of 'the forest, and the linnet of the grove: 'let them consider the life of animals, 'whose motions are regulated by instinct; they obey their guide and are 'happy. Let us therefore, at length, 'cease to dispute, and learn to live; 'throw away the incumbrance of precepts, which they who utter them with 'so much pride and pomp do not understand, and carry with us this simple and intelligible maxim—"That "deviation from nature is deviation "from happiness."

When he had spoken, he looked round him with a placid air, and enjoyed the consciousness of his own beneficence. 'Sir,' said the prince, with great modesty, 'as I, like all the rest of mankind, am desirous of felicity, my 'closest attention has been fixed upon 'your discourse: I doubt not the truth 'of a position which a man so learned 'has so confidently advanced. Let me 'only know what it is to live according 'to nature.'

'When I find young men so humble 'and so docile,' said the philosopher, 'I can deny them no information which 'my studies have enabled me to afford. 'To live according to nature, is to act 'always with due regard to the fitness 'arising from the relations and qualities 'of causes and effects; to concur with 'the great and unchangeable scheme 'of universal felicity; to co-operate with 'the general disposition and tendency of 'the present system of things.'

The prince soon found that this was one of the sages whom he should understand less as he heard him longer. He therefore bowed and was silent; and the philosopher, supposing him satisfied, and the rest vanquished, rose up and departed with the air of a man that had co-operated with the present system.

CHAP. XXIII.

THE PRINCE AND HIS SISTER DIVIDE BETWEEN THEM THE WORK OF OBSERVATION.

RASSELAS returned home full of reflections, doubtful how to direct his future steps. Of the way to happiness he

he found the learned and simple equally ignorant; but, as he was yet young, he flattered himself that he had time remaining for more experiments, and further enquiries. He communicated to Imlac his observations and his doubts, but was answered by him with new doubts, and remarks that gave him no comfort. He therefore discoursed more frequently and freely with his sister, who had yet the same hope with himself, and always assisted him to give some reason why, though he had been hitherto frustrated, he might succeed at last.

'We have hitherto,' said she, 'known 'but little of the world: we have never 'yet been either great or mean. In our 'own country, though we had royalty, 'we had no power, and in this we have 'not yet seen the private recesses of do-'mestick peace. Imlac favours not our 'search, lest we should in time find him 'mistaken. We will divide the task 'between us: you shall try what is to 'be found in the splendour of courts, 'and I will range the shades of humbler 'life. Perhaps command and authority 'may be the supreme blessings, as they 'afford most opportunities of doing 'good: or, perhaps, what this world 'can give may be found in the modest 'habitations of middle fortune; too low 'for great designs, and too high for 'penury and distress.'

CHAP. XXIV.

THE PRINCE EXAMINES THE HAPPINESS OF HIGH STATIONS.

RASSELAS applauded the design, and appeared next day with a splendid retinue at the court of the Bassa. He was soon distinguished for his magnificence, and admitted, as a prince whose curiosity had brought him from distant countries, to an intimacy with the great officers, and frequent conversation with the Bassa himself.

He was at first inclined to believe, that the man must be pleased with his own condition, whom all approached with reverence, and heard with obedience, and who had the power to extend his edicts to a whole kingdom. 'There can 'be no pleasure,' said he, 'equal to 'that of feeling at once the joy of thou-'sands all made happy by wise admi-'nistration. Yet, since, by the law of 'subordination, this sublime delight can 'be in one nation but the lot of one, it 'is surely reasonable to think, that there 'is some satisfaction more popular and 'accessible, and that millions can hardly 'be subjected to the will of a single man, 'only to fill his particular breast with 'incommunicable content.'

These thoughts were often in his mind, and he found no solution of the difficulty. But as presents and civilities gained him more familiarity, he found that almost every man who stood high in employment hated all the rest, and was hated by them, and that their lives were a continual succession of plots and detections, stratagems and escapes, faction and treachery. Many of those who surrounded the Bassa, were sent only to watch and report his conduct; every tongue was muttering censure, and every eye was searching for a fault.

At last the letters of revocation arrived, the Bassa was carried in chains to Constantinople, and his name was mentioned no more.

'What are we now to think of the 'prerogatives of power,' said Rasselas to his sister; 'is it without any efficacy 'to good? or, is the subordinate degree 'only dangerous, and the supreme safe 'and glorious? Is the Sultan the only 'happy man in his dominions? or, is 'the Sultan himself subject to the tor-'ments of suspicion, and the dread of 'enemies?'

In a short time the second Bassa was deposed. The Sultan, that had advanced him, was murdered by the Janisaries, and his successor had other views and different favourites.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

THE HISTORY OF RASSELAS, PRINCE OF ABISSINIA.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

CHAP. XXV.

THE PRINCESS PERSUES HER ENQUIRY WITH MORE DILIGENCE THAN SUCCESS.

THE princeſs, in the mean time, inſinuated herſelf into many families, for there are few doors through which liberality, joined with good humour, cannot find it's way. The daughters of many houſes were airy and cheerful, but Nekayah had been too long accuſtomed to the converſation of Imlac and her brother to be much pleaſed with childiſh levity and prattle which had no meaning. She found their thoughts narrow, their wiſhes low, and their merriment often artificial. Their pleaſures, poor as they were, could not be preſerved pure, but were embittered by petty competitions and worthleſs emulation. They were always jealous of the beauty of each other; of a quality to which ſolicitude can add nothing, and from which detraction can take nothing away. Many were in love with triflers like themſelves, and many fancied that they were in love when in truth they were only idle. Their affection was fixed on ſenſe or virtue, and therefore ſeldom ended but in vexation. Their grief, however, like their joy, was tranſient; every thing floated in their mind unconnected with the paſt or future, ſo that one deſire eaſily gave way to another, as a ſecond ſtone caſt into the water effaces and confounds the circles of the firſt.

With theſe girls ſhe played as with inoffenſive animals, and found them proud of her countenance, and weary of her company.

But her purpoſe was to examine more deeply, and her affability eaſily perſuaded the hearts that were ſwelling with ſorrow to diſcharge their ſecrets in her ear: and thoſe whom hope flattered, or proſperity delighted, often courted her to partake their pleaſures.

The princeſs and her brother commonly met in the evening in a private ſummer-houſe on the bank of the Nile, and related to each other the occurrences of the day. As they were ſitting together, the princeſs caſt her eyes upon the river that flowed before her. 'Anſwer,' ſaid ſhe, 'great father of waters, thou that rolleſt thy floods through eighty nations, to the invocations of the

'the daughter of thy native king. Tell 'me if thou watereſt, through all thy 'courſe, a ſingle habitation from which 'thou doſt not hear the murmurs of 'complaint?'

'You are then,' ſaid Raſſelas, 'not 'more ſucceſsful in private houſes than 'I have been in courts.'—'I have, 'ſince the laſt partition of our pro-'vinces,' ſaid the princeſs, 'enabled 'myſelf to enter familiarly into many 'families, where there was the faireſt 'ſhew of proſperity and peace, and 'know not one houſe that is not haunt-'ed by ſome fury that deſtroys their 'quiet.

'I did not ſeek eaſe among the poor, 'becauſe I concluded that there it could 'not be found. But I ſaw many poor, 'whom I had ſuppoſed to live in affluence. Poverty has, in large cities, 'very different appearances: it is often 'concealed in ſplendour, and often in 'extravagance. It is the care of a very 'great part of mankind to conceal their 'indigence from the reſt: they ſupport 'themſelves by temporary expedients, 'and every day is loſt in contriving for 'the morrow.

'This, however, was an evil, which, 'though frequent, I ſaw with leſs pain, 'becauſe I could relieve it. Yet ſome 'have refuſed my bounties; more of-'fended with my quickneſs to detect 'their wants, than pleaſed with my rea-'dineſs to ſuccour them: and others, 'whoſe exigencies compelled them to 'admit my kindneſs, have never been 'able to forgive their benefactreſs. Ma-'ny, however, have been ſincerely grate-'ful, without the oſtentation of grati-'tude, or the hope of other favours.'

CHAP. XXVI.

THE PRINCESS CONTINUES HER REMARKS UPON PRIVATE LIFE.

NEKAYAH perceiving her bro-ther's attention fixed, proceeded in her narrative.

'In families, where there is or is not 'poverty, there is commonly diſcord: 'if a kingdom be, as Imlac tells us, a 'great family, a family likewiſe is a 'little kingdom, torn with factions, and 'expoſed to revolutions. An unprac-'tiſed obſerver expects the love of pa-'rents and children to be conſtant and 'equal; but this kindneſs ſeldom con-'tinues beyond the years of infancy: 'in a ſhort time the children become 'rivals to their parents. Benefits are 'allayed by reproaches, and gratitude 'debaſed by envy.

'Parents and children ſeldom act in 'concert: each child endeavours to ap-'propriate the eſteem or fondneſs of the 'parents, and the parents, with yet leſs 'temptation, betray each other to their 'children; thus ſome place their confi-'dence in the father, and ſome in the 'mother, and by degrees, the houſe is 'filled with artifices and feuds.

'The opinions of children and pa-'rents, of the young and the old, are 'naturally oppoſite, by the contrary 'effects of hope and deſpondence, of 'expectation and experience, without 'crime or folly on either ſide. The 'colours of life in youth and age ap-'pear different, as the face of nature in 'ſpring and winter. And how can 'children credit the aſſertions of parents, 'which their own eyes ſhow them to be 'falſe?'

'Few parents act in ſuch a manner as 'much to enforce their maxims by the 'credit of their lives. The old man 'truſts wholly to ſlow contrivance and 'gradual progreſſion: the youth expects 'to force his way by genius, vigour, 'and precipitance. The old man pays 'regard to riches, and the youth reve-'rences virtue. The old man deifies 'prudence: the youth commits himſelf 'to magnanimity and chance. The 'young man, who intends no ill, be-'lieves that none is intended, and there-'fore acts with openneſs and candour: 'but his father, having ſuffered the in-'juries of fraud, is impelled to ſuſpect, 'and too often allured to practiſe it. 'Age looks with anger on the temerity 'of youth, and youth with contempt on 'the ſcrupuloſity of age. Thus parents 'and children, for the greateſt part, live 'on to love leſs and leſs: and, if thoſe 'whom nature has thus cloſely united 'are the torments of each other, where 'ſhall we look for tenderneſs and con-'ſolation?'

'Surely,' ſaid the prince, 'you muſt 'have been unfortunate in your choice of 'acquaintance: I am unwilling to be-'lieve, that the moſt tender of all rela-'tions is thus impeded in it's effects by 'natural neceſſity.'

'Domeſtick diſcord,' anſwered ſhe, 'is

'is not inevitably and fatally neceſſary: but yet it is not eaſily avoided. We ſeldom ſee that a whole family is virtuous: the good and evil cannot well agree; and the evil can yet leſs agree with one another: even the virtuous fall ſometimes to variance, when their virtues are of different kinds, and tending to extremes. In general, thoſe parents have moſt reverence who moſt deſerve it: for he that lives well cannot be deſpiſed.

'Many other evils infeſt private life. Some are the ſlaves of ſervants whom they have truſted with their affairs. Some are kept in continual anxiety to the caprice of rich relations, whom they cannot pleaſe, and dare not offend. Some huſbands are imperious, and ſome wives perverſe: and, as it is always more eaſy to do evil than good, though the wiſdom or virtue of one can very rarely make many happy, the folly or vice of one may often make many miſerable.'

'If ſuch be the general effect of marriage,' ſaid the prince, 'I ſhall, for the future, think it dangerous to connect my intereſt with that of another, leſt I ſhould be unhappy by my partner's fault.'

'I have met,' ſaid the princeſs, 'with many who live ſingle for that reaſon; but I never found that their prudence ought to raiſe envy. They dream away their time without friendſhip, without fondneſs, and are driven to rid themſelves of the day, for which they have no uſe, by childiſh amuſements, or vicious delights. They act as beings under the conſtant ſenſe of ſome known inferiority, that fills their minds with rancour, and their tongues with cenſure. They are peeviſh at home, and malevolent abroad; and, as the outlaws of human nature, make it their buſineſs and their pleaſure to diſturb that ſociety which debars them from it's privileges. To live without feeling or exciting ſympathy, to be fortunate without adding to the felicity of others, or afflicted without taſting the balm of pity, is a ſtate more gloomy than ſolitude: it is not retreat, but excluſion from mankind. Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleaſures.'

'What then is to be done?' ſaid Raſſelas; 'the more we enquire, the leſs we can reſolve. Surely he is moſt likely to pleaſe himſelf that has no other inclination to regard.'

CHAP. XXVII.

DISQUISITION UPON GREATNESS.

THE converſation had a ſhort pauſe. The prince, having conſidered his ſiſter's obſervations, told her, that ſhe had ſurveyed life with prejudice, and ſuppoſed miſery where ſhe did not find it. 'Your narrative,' ſays he, 'throws yet a darker gloom upon the proſpects of futurity: the predictions of Imlac were but faint ſketches of the evils painted by Nekayah. I have been lately convinced that quiet is not the daughter of grandeur, or of power: that her preſence is not to be bought by wealth, nor enforced by conqueſt. It is evident, that as any man acts in a wider compaſs, he muſt be more expoſed to oppoſition from enmity or miſcarriage from chance; whoever has many to pleaſe or to govern, muſt uſe the miniſtry of many agents, ſome of whom will be wicked, and ſome ignorant; by ſome he will be miſled, and by others betrayed. If he gratifies one he will offend another: thoſe that are not favoured will think themſelves injured; and, ſince favours can be conferred but upon few, the greater number will be always diſcontented.'

'The diſcontent,' ſaid the princeſs, 'which is thus unreaſonable, I hope that I ſhall always have ſpirit to deſpiſe, and, you power to repreſs.'

'Diſcontent,' anſwered Raſſelas, 'will not always be without reaſon under the moſt juſt and vigilant adminiſtration of publick affairs. None, however attentive, can always diſcover that merit which indigence or faction may happen to obſcure; and none, however powerful, can always reward it. Yet, he that ſees inferiour deſert advanced above him, will naturally impute that preference to partiality or caprice; and, indeed, it can ſcarcely be hoped that any man, however magnanimous by nature, or exalted by condition, will be able to perſiſt for ever in the fixed and inexorable juſtice of diſtribution: he will ſometimes indulge his own affections, and ſometimes thoſe of his favourites; he will permit ſome to pleaſe him who can never ſerve him; he will diſcover in thoſe whom he loves, quali-

'ties which in reality they do not poſſeſs; 'and to thoſe, from whom he receives 'pleaſure, he will in his turn endeavour 'to give it. Thus will recommendations 'ſometimes prevail which were purchaſ-'ed by money, or by the more deſtructive 'bribery of flattery and ſervility.

'He that has much to do will do 'ſomething wrong, and of that wrong 'muſt ſuffer the conſequences; and, if 'it were poſſible that he ſhould always 'act rightly, yet when ſuch numbers are 'to judge of his conduct, the bad will 'cenſure and obſtruct him by male-'volence, and the good ſometimes by 'miſtake.

'The higheſt ſtations cannot there-'fore hope to be the abodes of happineſs, 'which I would willingly believe to have 'fled from thrones and palaces to ſeats of 'humble privacy and placid obſcurity. 'For what can hinder the ſatisfaction, 'or intercept the expectations, of him 'whoſe abilities are adequate to his em-'ployments, who ſees with his own eyes 'the whole circuit of his influence, who 'chooſes by his own knowledge all whom 'he truſts, and whom none are tempted 'to deceive by hope or fear? Surely he 'has nothing to do but to love and to be 'loved, to be virtuous and to be happy.'

'Whether perfect happineſs would 'be procured by perfect goodneſs,' ſaid Nekayah, this world will never afford 'an opportunity of deciding. But this, 'at leaſt, may be maintained, that we 'do no always find viſible happineſs 'in proportion to viſible virtue. All 'natural, and almoſt all political evils, 'are incident alike to the bad and good: 'they are confounded in the miſery of 'a famine, and not much diſtinguiſhed 'in the fury of a faction; they ſink to-'gether in a tempeſt, and are driven to-'gether from their country by invaders. 'All that virtue can afford is quietneſs 'of conſcience, a ſteady proſpect of a 'happier ſtate; this may enable us to en-'dure calamity with patience; but re-'member that patience muſt ſuppoſe 'pain.'

CHAP. XXVIII.

RASSELAS AND NEKAYAH CONTINUE THEIR CONVERSATION.

'DEAR princeſs,' ſaid Raſſelas, 'you fall into the common er-'rours of exaggeratory declamation, by 'producing, in a familiar diſquiſition, 'examples of national calamities, and 'ſcenes of extenſive miſery, which are 'found in books rather than in the 'world, and which, as they are horrid, 'are ordained to be rare. Let us not 'imagine evils which we do not feel, 'nor injure life by miſrepreſentations. 'I cannot bear that querulous eloquence 'which threatens every city with a ſiege 'like that of Jeruſalem, that makes fa-'mine attend on every flight of locuſts, 'and ſuſpends peſtilence on the wing of 'every blaſt that iſſues from the ſouth.

'On neceſſary and inevitable evils, 'which overwhelm kingdoms at once, 'all diſputation is vain: when they hap-'pen they muſt be endured. But it is 'evident, that theſe burſts of univerſal 'diſtreſs are more dreaded than felt; 'thouſands and ten thouſands flouriſh 'in youth, and wither in age, without 'the knowledge of any other than do-'meſtick evils, and ſhare the ſame plea-'ſures and vexations, whether their 'kings are mild or cruel, whether the 'armies of their country perſue their 'enemies, or retreat before them. While 'courts are diſturbed with inteſtine com-'petitions, and ambaſſadors are nego-'ciating in foreign countries, the ſmith 'ſtill plies his anvil, and the huſbandman 'drives his plow forward; the neceſſaries 'of life are required and obtained; and 'the ſucceſſive buſineſs of the ſeaſons 'continues to make it's wonted revolu-'tions.

'Let us ceaſe to conſider what, per-'haps, may never happen, and what, 'when it ſhall happen, will laugh at hu-'man ſpeculation. We will not endea-'vour to modify the motions of the ele-'ments, or to fix the deſtiny of king-'doms. It is our buſineſs to conſider 'what beings like us may perform; each 'labouring for his own happineſs, by 'promoting within his circle, however 'narrow, the happineſs of others.

'Marriage is evidently the dictate of 'nature; men and women are made to 'be companions of each other, and 'therefore I cannot be perſuaded but 'that marriage is one of the means of 'happineſs.'

'I know not,' ſaid the princeſs, 'whether marriage be more than one of 'the innumerable modes of human mi-'ſery. When I ſee and reckon the va-'rious forms of connubial infelicity, 'the unexpected cauſes of laſting diſ-

'cord,

cord, the diverſities of temper, the oppoſitions of opinion, the rude colliſions of contrary deſire, where both are urged by violent impulſes, the obſtinate conteſts of diſagreeable virtues, where both are ſupported by conſciouſneſs of good intention, I am ſometimes diſpoſed to think with the ſeverer caſuiſts of moſt nations, that marriage is rather permitted than approved, and that none, but by the inſtigation of a paſſion too much indulged, entangle themſelves with indiſſoluble compacts.'

'You ſeem to forget,' replied Raſſelas, 'that you have, even now, repreſented celibacy as leſs happy than marriage. Both conditions may be bad, but they cannot both be worſt. Thus it happens, when wrong opinions are entertained, that they mutually deſtroy each other, and leave the mind open to truth.'

'I did not expect,' anſwered the princeſs, 'to hear that imputed to falſehood which is the conſequence only of frailty. To the mind, as to the eye, it is difficult to compare with exactneſs objects vaſt in their extent, and various in their parts. Where we ſee or conceive the whole at once, we readily note the diſcriminations, and decide the preference: but of two ſyſtems, of which neither can be ſurveyed by any human being in it's full compaſs of magnitude and multiplicity of complication, where is the wonder, that judging of the whole by parts, I am alternately affected by one and the other as either preſſes on my memory or fancy? We differ from ourſelves juſt as we differ from each other, when we ſee only part of the queſtion, as in the multifarious relations of politicks and morality; but when we perceive the whole at once, as in numerical computations, all agree in one judgment, and none ever varies his opinion.'

'Let us not add,' ſaid the prince, 'to the other evils of life, the bitterneſs of controverſy, nor endeavour to vie with each other in ſubtilties of argument. We are employed in a ſearch, of which both are equally to enjoy the ſucceſs, or ſuffer by the miſcarriage. It is therefore fit that we aſſiſt each other. You ſurely conclude too haſtily from the infelicity of marriage againſt it's inſtitution: will not the miſery of life prove equally that life cannot be the gift of Heaven? The world muſt be peopled by marriage, or peopled without it.'

'How the world is to be peopled,' returned Nekayah, 'is not my care, and needs not be yours. I ſee no danger that the preſent generation ſhould omit to leave ſucceſſors behind them: we are not now inquiring for the world, but for ourſelves.'

CHAP. XXIX.

THE DEBATE OF MARRIAGE CONTINUED.

'THE good of the whole,' ſays Raſſelas, 'is the ſame with the good of all it's parts. If marriage be beſt for mankind, it muſt be evidently beſt for individuals, or a permanent and neceſſary duty muſt be the cauſe of evil, and ſome muſt be inevitably ſacrificed to the convenience of others. In the eſtimate which you have made of the two ſtates, it appears that the incommodities of a ſingle life are, in a great meaſure, neceſſary and certain, but thoſe of the conjugal ſtate accidental and avoidable.

'I cannot forbear to flatter myſelf, that prudence and benevolence will make marriage happy. The general folly of mankind is the cauſe of general complaint. What can be expected but diſappointment and repentance from a choice made in the immaturity of youth, in the ardour of deſire, without judgment, without foreſight, without inquiry after conformity of opinions, ſimilarity of manners, rectitude of judgment, or purity of ſentiment.

'Such is the common proceſs of marriage. A youth or maiden meeting by chance, or brought together by artifice, exchange glances, reciprocate civilities, go home, and dream of one another. Having little to divert attention, or diverſify thought, they find themſelves uneaſy when they are apart, and therefore conclude that they ſhall be happy together. They marry, and diſcover what nothing but voluntary blindneſs before had concealed; they wear out life in altercations, and charge nature with cruelty.

'From thoſe early marriages proceeds likewiſe the rivalry of parents and children: the ſon is eager to enjoy the world before the father is willing

'to forsake it, and there is hardly room 'at once for two generations. The 'daughter begins to bloom before the 'mother can be content to fade, and 'neither can forbear to wish for the ab-'sence of the other.

'Surely all these evils may be avoided 'by that deliberation and delay which 'prudence prescribes to irrevocable 'choice. In the variety and jollity of 'youthful pleasures life may be well 'enough supported without the help of 'a partner. Longer time will increase 'experience, and wider views will allow 'better opportunities of inquiry and se-'lection: one advantage, at least, will 'be certain; the parents will be visibly 'older than their children.'

'What reason cannot collect,' said Nekayah, 'and what experiment has 'not yet taught, can be known only 'from the report of others. I have 'been told that late marriages are not 'eminently happy. This is a question 'too important to be neglected, and I 'have often proposed it to those, whose 'accuracy of remark, and comprehen-'siveness of knowledge, made their suf-'frages worthy of regard. They have 'generally determined, that it is dange-'rous for a man and woman to suspend 'their fate upon each other, at a time 'when opinions are fixed, and habits 'are established; when friendships have 'been contracted on both sides, when 'life has been planned into method, and 'the mind has long enjoyed the con-'templation of it's own prospects.

'It is scarcely possible that two tra-'velling through the world under the 'conduct of chance, should have been 'both directed to the same path, and it 'will not often happen that either will 'quit the track which custom has made 'pleasing. When the desultory levity 'of youth has settled into regularity, it 'is soon succeeded by pride ashamed to 'yield, or obstinacy delighting to con-'tend. And even though mutual esteem 'produces mutual desire to please, time 'itself, as it modifies unchangeably the 'external mien, determines likewise the 'direction of the passions, and gives an 'inflexible rigidity to the manners. Long 'customs are not easily broken: he that 'attempts to change the course of his 'own life, very often labours in vain; 'and how shall we do that for others, 'which we are seldom able to do for our-'selves?'

'But surely,' interposed the prince, 'you suppose the chief motive of choice 'forgotten or neglected. Whenever I 'shall seek a wife, it shall be my first 'question, whether she be willing to be 'led by reason?'

'Thus it is,' said Nekayah, 'that 'philosophers are deceived. There are a 'thousand familiar disputes which rea-'son never can decide; questions that 'elude investigation, and make logick 'ridiculous; cases where something 'must be done, and where little can be 'said. Consider the state of mankind, 'and inquire how few can be supposed 'to act upon any occasions, whether 'small or great, with all the reasons of 'action present to their minds. Wretch-'ed would be the pair above all names 'of wretchedness, who should be doom-'ed to adjust by reason, every morn-'ing, all the minute detail of a domes-'tick day.

'Those who marry at an advanced 'age, will probably escape the encroach-'ments of their children; but, in di-'minution of this advantage, they will 'be likely to leave them, ignorant and 'helpless, to a guardian's mercy: or, 'if that should not happen, they must 'at least go out of the world before they 'see those whom they love best, either 'wise or great.

'From their children, if they have 'less to fear, they have less also to hope, 'and they lose, without equivalent, the 'joys of early love, and the conveni-'ence of uniting with manners pliant, 'and minds susceptible of new impres-'sions, which might wear away their 'dissimilitudes by long cohabitation, 'as soft bodies, by continual attri-'tion, conform their surfaces to each 'other.

'I believe it will be found that those 'who marry late are best pleased with 'their children, and those who marry 'early with their partners.'

'The union of these two affections,' said Rasselas, 'would produce all that 'could be wished. Perhaps there is a 'time when marriage might unite them, 'a time neither too early for the father, 'nor too late for the husband.'

'Every hour,' answered the princess, 'confirms my prejudice in favour of the 'position so often uttered by the mouth 'of Imlac, "That nature sets her gifts "on the right hand and on the left." 'Those conditions, which flatter hope,

'and

, and attract desire, are so constituted, ' that, as we approach one, we recede ' from another. There are goods so ' opposed that we cannot seize both, but, ' by too much prudence, may pass be- ' tween them at too great a distance to ' reach either. This is often the fate of ' long consideration; he does nothing ' who endeavours to do more than is ' allowed to humanity. Flatter not ' yourself with contrarieties of pleasure. ' Of the blessings set before you make ' your choice, and be content. No man ' can taste the fruits of autumn while ' he is delighting his scent with the ' flowers of the spring. No man can, ' at the same time, fill his cup from ' the source and from the mouth of the ' Nile.'

CHAP. XXX.

IMLAC ENTERS, AND CHANGES THE CONVERSATION.

HERE Imlac entered and interrupted them. 'Imlac,' said Rasselas, 'I have been taking from the ' princess the dismal history of private ' life, and am almost discouraged from ' further search.'

' It seems to me,' said Imlac, ' that ' while you are making the choice of ' life, you neglect to live. You wander ' about a single city, which, however ' large and diversified, can now afford ' few novelties, and forget that you are ' in a country, famous among the earliest monarchies for the power and ' wisdom of it's inhabitants; a country ' where the sciences first dawned that illuminate the world, and beyond which ' the arts cannot be traced of civil society or domestick life.

' The old Egyptians have left behind ' them monuments of industry and ' power, before which all European ' magnificence is confessed to fade away. ' The ruins of their architecture are the ' schools of modern builders, and from ' the wonders which time has spared we ' may conjecture, though uncertainly, ' what it has destroyed.'

' My curiosity,' said Rasselas, ' does ' not very strongly lead me to survey ' piles of stone, or mounds of earth; ' my business is with man. I came hither not to measure fragments of temples, or trace choaked aqueducts, but ' to look upon the various scenes of the ' present world.'

' The things that are now before us,' said the princess, ' require attention, ' and deserve it. What have I to do ' with the heroes or the monuments of ' ancient times? with times which never ' can return, and heroes, whose form ' of life was different from all that the ' present condition of mankind requires ' or allows?'

' To know any thing,' returned the poet, ' we must know it's effects; to see ' men we must see their works, that we ' may learn what reason has dictated, ' or passion has incited, and find what ' are the most powerful motives of action. To judge rightly of the present, ' we must oppose it to the past; for all ' judgment is comparative, and of the ' future nothing can be known. The ' truth is, that no mind is much employed upon the present: recollection ' and anticipation fill up almost all our ' moments. Our passions are joy and ' grief, love and hatred, hope and fear. ' Of joy and grief the past is the object, ' and the future of hope and fear; even ' love and hatred respect the past, for ' the cause must have been before the ' effect.

' The present state of things is the consequence of the former, and it is natural to inquire what were the sources ' of the good that we enjoy, or the evil ' that we suffer. If we act only for ' ourselves, to neglect the study of history is not prudent: if we are entrusted with the care of others, it is not ' just. Ignorance, when it is voluntary, is criminal; and he may properly be charged with evil who refused ' to learn how he might prevent it.

' There is no part of history so generally useful as that which relates the ' progress of the human mind, the gradual improvement of reason, the successive advances of science, the vicissitudes of learning and ignorance which ' are the light and darkness of thinking ' beings, the extinction and resuscitation of arts, and the revolutions ' of the intellectual world. If accounts of battles and invasions are ' peculiarly the business of princes, the ' useful or elegant arts are not to ' be neglected; those who have kingdoms to govern, have understandings ' to cultivate.

' Example is always more efficacious

' than

'than precept. A soldier is formed in 'war, and a painter must copy pictures. 'In this, contemplative life has the 'advantage: great actions are seldom 'seen, but the labours of art are always 'at hand for those who desire to know 'what art has been able to perform.

'When the eye or the imagination is 'struck with any uncommon work, the 'next transition of an active mind is to 'the means by which it was performed. 'Here begins the true use of such con-'templation; we enlarge our compre-'hension by new ideas, and perhaps 'recover some art lost to mankind, or 'learn what is less perfectly known in 'our own country. At least we com-'pare our own with former times, and 'either rejoice at our improvements, or, 'what is the first motion towards good, 'discover our defects.'

'I am willing,' said the prince, 'to 'see all that can deserve my search.' '—And I,' said the princess, 'shall re-'joice to learn something of the man-'ners of antiquity.'

'The most pompous monument of 'Egyptian greatness, and one of the 'most bulky works of manual industry,' said Imlac, 'are the Pyramids; fa-'bricks raised before the time of histo-'ry, and of which the earliest narra-'tives afford us only uncertain tradi-'tions. Of these the greatest is still 'standing very little injured by time.'

'Let us visit them to-morrow,' said Nekayah. 'I have often heard of the 'Pyramids, and shall not rest, till I 'have seen them within and without 'with my own eyes.'

CHAP. XXXI.

THEY VISIT THE PYRAMIDS.

THE resolution being thus taken, they set out the next day. They laid tents upon their camels, being re-solved to stay among the Pyramids till their curiosity was fully satisfied. They travelled gently, turned aside to every thing remarkable, stopped from time to time and conversed with the inhabitants, and observed the various appearances of towns ruined and inhabited, of wild and cultivated nature.

When they came to the great pyramid, they were astonished at the extent of the base, and the height of the top. Imlac explained to them the principles upon which the pyramidal form was chosen for a fabrick intended to co-extend it's duration with that of the world: he shewed that it's gradual diminution gave it such stability, as defeated all the com-mon attacks of the elements, and could scarcely be overthrown by earthquakes themselves, the least resistible of natural violence. A concussion that should shatter the pyramid would threaten the dissolution of the continent.

They measured all it's dimensions, and pitched their tents at it's foot. Next day they prepared to enter it's interior apartments, and having hired the com-mon guides, climbed up to the first pas-sage, when the favourite of the princess, looking into the cavity, stepped back and trembled. 'Pekuah,' said the prin-cess, 'of what art thou afraid?'—'Of 'the narrow entrance,' answered the lady, 'and of the dreadful gloom. I dare not 'enter a place which must surely be in-'habited by unquiet souls. The ori-'ginal possessors of these dreadful vaults 'will start up before us, and perhaps 'shut us in for ever.' She spoke, and threw her arms round the neck of her mistress.

'If all your fear be of apparitions,' said the prince, 'I will promise you safe-'ty: there is no danger from the dead; 'he that is once buried will be seen no 'more.'

'That the dead are seen no more,' said Imlac, 'I will not undertake to 'maintain, against the concurrent and 'unvaried testimony of all ages, and of 'all nations. There is no people, rude or 'learned, among whom apparitions of 'the dead are not related and believed. 'This opinion, which perhaps prevails 'as far as human nature is diffused, 'could become universal only by it's 'truth: those, that never heard of one 'another, would not have agreed in 'a tale which nothing but experience 'can make credible. That it is doubt-'ed by single cavillers, can very little 'weaken the general evidence; and some 'who deny it with their tongues confess 'it by their fears.

'Yet I do not mean to add new ter-'rours to those which have already 'seized upon Pekuah. There can be 'no reason why spectres should haunt 'the pyramid more than other places, 'or why they should have power or 'will to hurt innocence and purity.

'Our

C. H. Burney del. Heath. sculp.

Plate II.

Published as the Act directs, by Harrison & Co. July 2. 1787.

'Our entrance is no violation of their 'privileges; we can take nothing from 'them, how then can we offend them?'

'My dear Pekuah,' said the princess, 'I will always go before you, and Imlac shall follow you. Remember that 'you are the companion of the princess 'of Abissinia.'

'If the princess is pleased that her 'servant should die,' returned the lady, 'let her command some death less 'dreadful than inclosure in this horrid 'cavern. You know I dare not disobey you: I must go if you command 'me; but, if I once enter, I never shall 'come back.'

The princess saw that her fear was too strong for expostulation or reproof, and embracing her, told her that she should stay in the tent till their return. Pekuah was yet not satisfied, but entreated the princess not to persue so dreadful a purpose as that of entering the recesses of the pyramid. 'Though 'I cannot teach courage,' said Nekayah, 'I must not learn cowardice; nor 'leave at last undone what I came hither 'only to do.'

CHAP. XXXII.

THEY ENTER THE PYRAMID.

PEKUAH descended to the tents, and the rest entered the pyramid: they passed through the galleries, surveyed the vaults of marble, and examined the chest in which the body of the founder is supposed to have been reposited. They then sat down in one of the most spacious chambers to rest a while before they attempted to return.

'We have now,' said Imlac, 'gratified our minds with an exact view of 'the greatest work of man, except the 'wall of China.

'Of the wall it is very easy to assign 'the motive. It secured a wealthy and 'timorous nation from the incursions of 'Barbarians, whose unskilfulness in 'arts made it easier for them to supply 'their wants by rapine than by industry, and who from time to time poured in upon the habitations of peaceful 'commerce, as vultures descend upon 'domestick fowl. Their celerity and 'fierceness made the wall necessary, 'and their ignorance made it efficacious.

'But for the pyramids no reason has 'ever been given adequate to the cost 'and labour of the work. The narrowness of the chambers proves that it 'could afford no retreat from enemies, 'and treasures might have been reposited at far less expence with equal 'security. It seems to have been erected only in compliance with that hunger of imagination which preys incessantly upon life, and must be always appeased by some employment. 'Those who have already all that they 'can enjoy, must enlarge their desires. 'He that has built for use, till use is 'supplied, must begin to build for vanity, and extend his plan to the utmost 'power of human performance, that he 'may not be soon reduced to form another wish.

'I consider this mighty structure as 'a monument of the insufficiency of 'human enjoyments. A king, whose 'power is unlimited, and whose treasures surmount all real and imaginary 'wants, is compelled to solace, by the 'erection of a pyramid, the satiety of 'dominion and tastelessness of pleasures, 'and to amuse the tediousness of declining life, by seeing thousands labouring without end, and one stone, 'for no purpose, laid upon another. 'Whoever thou art, that, not content 'with a moderate condition, imaginest 'happiness in royal magnificence, and 'dreamest that command or riches can 'feed the appetite of novelty with perpetual gratifications, survey the pyramids, and confess thy folly!'

CHAP. XXXIII.

THE PRINCESS MEETS WITH AN UNEXPECTED MISFORTUNE.

THEY rose up, and returned through the cavity at which they had entered, and the princess prepared for her favourite a long narrative of dark labyrinths, and costly rooms, and of the different impressions which the varieties of the way had made upon her. But when they came to their train, they found every one silent and dejected: the men discovered shame and fear in their countenances, and the women were weeping in the tents.

What had happened they did not try to conjecture, but immediately inquired.

'You

'You had scarcely entered into the pyramid,' said one of the attendants, 'when a troop of Arabs rushed upon 'us: we were too few to resist them, 'and too slow to escape. They were 'about to search the tents, set us on our 'camels, and drive us along before them, 'when the approach of some Turkish 'horsemen put them to flight; but they 'seized the lady Pekuah with her two 'maids, and carried them away: the 'Turks are now pursuing them by our 'instigation, but I fear they will not be 'able to overtake them.'

The princess was overpowered with surprise and grief. Rassselas, in the first heat of his resentment, ordered his servants to follow him, and prepared to persue the robbers with his sabre in his hand. 'Sir,' said Imlac, 'what can 'you hope from violence or valour? the 'Arabs are mounted on horses trained to 'battle and retreat; we have only beasts 'of burden. By leaving our present 'station we may lose the princess, but 'cannot hope to regain Pekuah.'

In a short time the Turks returned, having not been able to reach the enemy. The princess burst out into new lamentations, and Rassselas could scarcely forbear to reproach them with cowardice; but Imlac was of opinion, that the escape of the Arabs was no addition to their misfortune, for perhaps they would have killed their captives rather than have resigned them.

CHAP. XXXIV.

THEY RETURN TO CAIRO WITHOUT PEKUAH.

THERE was nothing to be hoped from longer stay. They returned to Cairo repenting of their curiosity, censuring the negligence of the government, lamenting their own rashness which had neglected to procure a guard, imagining many expedients by which the loss of Pekuah might have been prevented, and resolving to do something for her recovery, though none could find any thing proper to be done.

Nekayah retired to her chamber, where her women attempted to comfort her, by telling her that all had their troubles, and that lady Pekuah had enjoyed much happiness in the world for a long time, and might reasonably expect a change of fortune. They hoped that some good would befall her wheresoever she was, and that their mistress would find another friend who might supply her place.

The princess made them no answer, and they continued the form of condolence, not much grieved in their hearts that the favourite was lost.

Next day the prince presented to the Bassa a memorial of the wrong which he had suffered, and a petition for redress. The Bassa threatened to punish the robbers, but did not attempt to catch them, nor indeed, could any account or description be given by which he might direct the persuit.

It soon appeared that nothing would be done by authority. Governors, being accustomed to hear of more crimes than they can punish, and more wrongs than they can redress, set themselves at ease by indiscriminate negligence, and presently forget the request when they lose sight of the petitioner.

Imlac then endeavoured to gain some intelligence by private agents. He found many who pretended to an exact knowledge of all the haunts of the Arabs, and to regular correspondence with their chiefs, and who readily undertook the recovery of Pekuah. Of these, some were furnished with money for their journey, and came back no more; some were liberally paid for accounts which a few days discovered to be false. But the princess would not suffer any means, however improbable, to be left untried. While she was doing something she kept her hope alive. As one expedient failed, another was suggested; when one messenger returned unsuccessful, another was dispatched to a different quarter.

Two months had now passed, and of Pekuah nothing had been heard; the hopes which they had endeavoured to raise in each other grew more languid, and the princess, when she saw nothing more to be tried, sunk down inconsolable in hopeless dejection. A thousand times she reproached herself with the easy compliance by which she permitted her favourite to stay behind her. 'Had 'not my fondness,' said she, 'lessened 'my authority, Pekuah had not dared 'to talk of her terrours. She ought to 'have feared me more than spectres. 'A severe look would have overpower-'ed her; a peremptory command would

'have

'have compelled obedience. Why did 'foolish indulgence prevail upon me? 'Why did I not speak, and refuse to 'hear?'

'Great princess,' said Imlac, 'do 'not reproach yourself for your virtue, 'or consider that as blameable by which 'evil has accidentally been caused. Your 'tenderness for the timidity of Pekuah 'was generous and kind. When we 'act according to our duty, we commit 'the event to him by whose laws our 'actions are governed, and who will suf-'fer none to be finally punished for obe-'dience. When, in prospect of some 'good, whether natural or moral, we 'break the rules prescribed us, we with-'draw from the direction of superior 'wisdom, and take all consequences 'upon ourselves. Man cannot so far 'know the connexion of causes and 'events, as that he may venture to do 'wrong in order to do right. When 'we pursue our end by lawful means, 'we may always console our miscarriage 'by the hope of future recompence. 'When we consult only our own policy, 'and attempt to find a nearer way to 'good, by overleaping the settled boun-'daries of right and wrong, we cannot 'be happy even by success, because we 'cannot escape the consciousness of our 'fault: but, if we miscarry, the disap-'pointment is irremediably embittered. 'How comfortless is the sorrow of him 'who feels at once the pangs of guilt, 'and the vexation of calamity which 'guilt has brought upon him?

'Consider, princess, what would have 'been your condition, if the Lady Pe-'kuah had entreated to accompany you, 'and being compelled to stay in the 'tents, had been carried away; or how 'would you have borne the thought, if 'you had forced her into the pyramid, 'and she had died before you in agonies 'of terrour?'

'Had either happened,' said Nekayah, 'I could not have endured life 'till now: I should have been tortured 'to madness by the remembrance of 'such cruelty, or must have pined away 'in abhorrence of myself.'

'This at least,' said Imlac, 'is the 'present reward of virtuous conduct, 'that no unlucky consequence can ob-'lige us to repent it.'

CHAP. XXXIV.

THE PRINCESS LANGUISHES FOR WANT OF PEKUAH.

NEKAYAH being thus reconciled to herself, found that no evil is insupportable but that which is accompanied with consciousness of wrong. She was, from that time, delivered from the violence of tempestuous sorrow, and sunk into silent pensiveness and gloomy tranquillity. She sat from morning to evening recollecting all that had been done or said by her Pekuah, treasured up with care every trifle on which Pekuah had set an accidental value, and which might recal to mind any little incident or careless conversation. The sentiments of her, whom she now expected to see no more, were treasured in her memory as rules of life, and she deliberated to no other end than to conjecture on any occasion what would have been the opinion and counsel of Pekuah.

The women, by whom she was attended, knew nothing of her real condition, and therefore she could not talk to them but with caution and reserve. She began to remit her curiosity, having no great care to collect notions which she had no convenience of uttering. Rasselas endeavoured first to comfort, and afterwards to divert her; he hired musicians, to whom she seemed to listen, but did not hear them; and procured masters to instruct her in various arts, whose lectures, when they visited her again, were again to be repeated. She had lost her taste of pleasure, and her ambition of excellence. And her mind, though forced into short excursions, always recurred to the image of her friend.

Imlac was every morning earnestly enjoined to renew his inquiries, and was asked every night whether he had yet heard of Pekuah, till not being able to return the princess the answer that she desired, he was less and less willing to come into her presence. She observed his backwardness, and commanded him to attend her. 'You are not,' said she, 'to confound impatience with resent-'ment, or to suppose that I charge you 'with negligence, because I repine at 'your unsuccessfulness. I do not much

'wonder at your abſence; I know that 'the unhappy are never pleaſing, and 'that all naturally avoid the contagion 'of miſery. To hear complaints is 'wearisome alike to the wretched and 'the happy; for who would cloud, by 'adventitious grief, the ſhort gleams of 'gaiety which life allows us? or who, 'that is ſtruggling under his own evils, 'will add to them the miſeries of an-'other?

'The time is at hand, when none 'ſhall be diſturbed any longer by the 'ſighs of Nekayah: my ſearch after hap-'pineſs is now at an end. I am reſolved 'to retire from the world with all it's 'flatteries and deceits, and will hide 'myſelf in ſolitude without any other 'care than to compoſe my thoughts, and 'regulate my hours by a conſtant ſuc-'ceſſion of innocent occupations, till, 'with a mind purified from all earthly 'deſires, I ſhall enter into that ſtate, to 'which all are haſtening, and in which 'I hope again to enjoy the friendſhip of 'Pekuah.'

'Do not entangle your mind,' ſaid Imlac, 'by irrevocable determinations, 'nor increaſe the burthen of life by a 'voluntary accumulation of miſery: the 'wearineſs of retirement will continue 'or increaſe when the loſs of Pekuah is 'forgotten. That you have been de-'prived of one pleaſure, is no very good 'reaſon for rejection of the reſt.'

'Since Pekuah was taken from me,' ſaid the princeſs, 'I have no pleaſure to 'reject or to retain. She that has no one 'to love or truſt has little to hope. She 'wants the radical principle of hap-'pineſs. We may, perhaps, allow that 'what ſatisfaction this world can afford, 'muſt ariſe from the conjunction of 'wealth, knowledge, and goodneſs: 'wealth is nothing but as it is beſtowed, 'and knowledge nothing but as it is 'communicated: they muſt therefore be 'imparted to others, and to whom could 'I now delight to impart them? Good-'neſs affords the only comfort which 'can be enjoyed without a partner, and 'goodneſs may be practiſed in retire-'ment.'

'How far ſolitude may admit good-'neſs, or advance it, I ſhall not,' replied Imlac, 'diſpute at preſent. Remember 'the confeſſion of the pious hermit. 'You will wiſh to return into the world, 'when the image of your companion has 'left your thoughts.'—'That time,' ſaid Nekayah, 'will never come. The 'generous frankneſs, the modeſt obſe-'quiouſneſs, and the faithful ſecrecy of 'my dear Pekuah, will always be more 'miſſed, as I ſhall live longer to ſee vice 'and folly.'

'The ſtate of a mind oppreſſed with 'a ſudden calamity,' ſaid Imlac, 'is 'like that of the fabulous inhabitants 'of the new created earth, who, when 'the firſt night came upon them, ſup-'poſed that day would never return. 'When the clouds of ſorrow gather over 'us, we ſee nothing beyond them, nor 'can imagine how they will be diſpell-'ed: yet a new day ſucceeded to the 'night, and ſorrow is never long with-'out a dawn of eaſe. But they who 'reſtrain themſelves from receiving com-'fort, do as the ſavages would have 'done, had they put out their eyes when 'it was dark. Our minds, like our bo-'dies, are in continual flux; ſomething 'is hourly loſt, and ſomething acquired. 'To loſe much at once is inconvenient 'to either; but while the vital powers 'remain uninjured, nature will find the 'means of reparation. Diſtance has 'the ſame effect on the mind as on the 'eye; and while we glide along the 'ſtream of time, whatever we leave be-'hind us is always leſſening, and that 'which we approach increaſing in mag-'nitude. Do not ſuffer life to ſtagnate; 'it will grow muddy for want of mo-'tion: commit yourſelf again to the 'current of the world; Pekuah will va-'niſh by degrees; you will meet in your 'way ſome other favourite, or learn to 'diffuſe yourſelf in general converſa-'tion.'

'At leaſt,' ſaid the prince, 'do not 'deſpair before all remedies have been 'tried: the enquiry after the unfortunate 'lady is ſtill continued, and ſhall be car-'ried on with yet greater diligence, on 'condition that you will promiſe to wait 'a year for the event, without any un-'alterable reſolution.'

Nekayah thought this a reaſonable demand, and made the promiſe to her brother, who had been adviſed by Imlac to require it. Imlac had, indeed, no great hope of regaining Pekuah; but he ſuppoſed, that if he could ſe-cure the interval of a year, the princeſs would be then in no danger of a cloiſter.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXV.

PEKUAH IS STILL REMEMBERED. THE PROGRESS OF SORROW.

NEKAYAH, seeing that nothing was omitted for the recovery of her favourite, and having, by her promise, set her intention of retirement at a distance, began imperceptibly to return to common cares and common pleasures. She rejoiced without her own consent at the suspension of her sorrows, and sometimes caught herself with indignation in the act of turning away her mind from the remembrance of her whom yet she resolved never to forget.

She then appointed a certain hour of the day for meditation on the merits and fondness of Pekuah, and for some weeks retired constantly at the time fixed, and returned with her eyes swollen and her countenance clouded. By degrees she grew less scrupulous, and suffered any important and pressing avocation to delay the tribute of daily tears. She then yielded to less occasions; sometimes forgot what she was indeed afraid to remember, and, at last, wholly released herself from the duty of periodical affliction.

Her real love of Pekuah was yet not diminished. A thousand occurrences brought her back to memory, and a thousand wants, which nothing but the confidence of friendship can supply, made her frequently regretted. She therefore solicited Imlac never to desist from enquiry, and to leave no art of intelligence untried, that, at least, she might have the comfort of knowing that she did not suffer by negligence or sluggishness. 'Yet what,' said she, 'is to 'be expected from our pursuit of happiness, when we find the state of life 'to be such, that happiness itself is the 'cause of misery? Why should we endeavour to attain that, of which the 'possession cannot be secured? I shall 'henceforward fear to yield my heart to 'excellence, however bright, or to fondness, however tender, lest I should lose 'again what I have lost in Pekuah.'

CHAP. XXXVI.

THE PRINCESS HEARS NEWS OF PEKUAH.

IN seven months, one of the messengers, who had been sent away upon the day when the promise was drawn from the princess, returned, after many unsuccessful rambles, from the borders of Nubia, with an account that Pekuah was in the hands of an Arab chief, who possessed a castle or fortress on the extremity of Egypt. The Arab, whose revenue was plunder, was willing to restore her, with her two attendants, for two hundred ounces of gold.

The price was no subject of debate. The princess was in extasies when she heard that her favourite was alive, and might so cheaply be ransomed. She could not think of delaying for a moment Pekuah's happiness or her own, but entreated her brother to send back the messenger with the sum required. Imlac being consulted, was not very confident of the veracity of the relator, and was still more doubtful of the Arab's faith, who might, if he were too liberally trusted, detain at once the money and the captives. He thought it dangerous to put themselves in the power of the Arab, by going into his district, and could not expect that the Rover would so much expose himself as to come into the lower country, where he might be seized by the forces of the Bassa.

It is difficult to negociate where neither will trust. But Imlac, after some deliberation, directed the messenger to propose that Pekuah should be conducted by ten horsemen to the monastery of St. Antony, which is situated in the deserts of Upper-Egypt, where she should be met by the same number, and her ransom should be paid.

That no time might be lost, as they expected that the proposal would not be refused, they immediately began their journey to the monastery; and, when they arrived, Imlac went forward with the former messenger to the Arab's fortress. Rasselas was desirous to go with them; but neither his sister nor Imlac would consent. The Arab, according to the custom of his nation, observed the laws of hospitality with great exactness to those who put themselves into his power, and, in a few days, brought Pekuah with her maids, by easy journies, to their place appointed, where receiving the stipulated price, he restored her with great respect to liberty and her friends, and undertook to conduct them back towards Cairo beyond all danger of robbery or violence.

The princess and her favourite embraced each other with transport too vio-

lent to be expreſſed, and went out together to pour the tears of tenderneſs in ſecret, and exchange profeſſions of kindneſs and gratitude. After a few hours they returned into the refectory of the convent, where, in the preſence of the prior and his brethren, the prince required of Pekuah the hiſtory of her adventures.

CHAP. XXXVII.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE LADY PEKUAH.

'AT what time, and in what manner, I was forced away,' ſaid Pekuah, 'your ſervants have told you. The ſuddenneſs of the event ſtruck me with ſurpriſe, and I was at firſt rather ſtupified than agitated with any paſſion of either fear or ſorrow. My confuſion was increaſed by the ſpeed and tumult of our flight, while we were followed by the Turks, who, as it ſeemed, ſoon deſpaired to overtake us, or were afraid of thoſe whom they made a ſhew of menacing.

'When the Arabs ſaw themſelves out of danger they ſlackened their courſe, and as I was leſs haraſſed by external violence, I began to feel more uneaſineſs in my mind. After ſome time we ſtopped near a ſpring ſhaded with trees in a pleaſant meadow, where we were ſet upon the ground, and offered ſuch refreſhments as our maſters were partaking. I was ſuffered to ſit with my maids apart from the reſt, and none attempted to comfort or inſult us. Here I firſt began to feel the full weight of my miſery. The girls ſat weeping in ſilence, and from time to time looked on me for ſuccour. I knew not to what condition we were doomed, nor could conjecture where would be the place of our captivity, or whence to draw any hope of deliverance. I was in the hands of robbers and ſavages, and had no reaſon to ſuppoſe that their pity was more than their juſtice, or that they would forbear the gratification of any ardour of deſire, or caprice of cruelty. I, however, kiſſed my maids, and endeavoured to pacify them by remarking, that we were yet treated with decency, and that, ſince we were now carried beyond perſuit, there was no danger of violence to our lives.

'When we were to be ſet again on horſeback, my maids clung round me, and refuſed to be parted, but I commanded them not to irritate thoſe who had us in their power. We travelled the remaining part of the day through an unfrequented and pathleſs country, and came by moon-light to the ſide of a hill, where the reſt of the troop was ſtationed. Their tents were pitched, and their fires kindled, and our chief was welcomed as a man much beloved by his dependants.

'We were received into a large tent, where we found women who had attended their huſbands in the expedition. They ſet before us the ſupper which they had provided, and I eat it rather to encourage my maids, than to comply with any appetite of my own. When the meat was taken away, they ſpread the carpets for repoſe. I was weary, and hoped to find in ſleep that remiſſion of diſtreſs which nature ſeldom denies. Ordering myſelf therefore to be undreſt, I obſerved that the women looked very earneſtly upon me, not expecting, I ſuppoſe, to ſee me ſo ſubmiſſively attended. When my upper veſt was taken off, they were apparently ſtruck with the ſplendour of my cloaths, and one of them timorouſly laid her hand upon the embroidery. She then went out, and, in a ſhort time, came back with another woman, who ſeemed to be of higher rank, and greater authority. She did, at her entrance, the uſual act of reverence, and taking me by the hand, placed me in a ſmaller tent, ſpread with finer carpets, where I ſpent the night quietly with my maids.

'In the morning, as I was ſitting on the graſs, the chief of the troop came towards me. I roſe up to receive him, and he bowed with great reſpect. "Illuſtrious lady," ſaid he, "my fortune is better than I had preſumed to hope; I am told by my women, that I have a princeſs in my camp."—"Sir," anſwered I, "your women have deceived themſelves and you; I am not a princeſs, but an unhappy ſtranger who intended ſoon to have left this country, in which I am now to be impriſoned for ever."—"Whoever, or whenceſoever, you are," returned the

'Arab,

'Arab, "your dress, and that of your "servants, shew your rank to be high, "and your wealth to be great. Why "should you, who can so easily procure "your ransom, think yourself in danger "of perpetual captivity? The purpose of "my incursions is to increase my riches, "or, more properly, to gather tribute. "The sons of Ishmael are the natural and "hereditary lords of this part of the con-"tinent, which is usurped by late invad-"ers, and low-born tyrants, from whom "we are compelled to take by the sword "what is denied to justice. The violence "of war admits no distinction; the lance, "that is lifted at guilt and power, will "sometimes fall on innocence and gen-"tleness."

"How little," said I, "did I expect "that yesterday it should have fallen "upon me!"

"Misfortunes," answered the Arab, "should always be expected. If the eye "of hostility could learn reverence or "pity, excellence like yours had been "exempt from injury. But the angels "of affliction spread their toils alike for "the virtuous and the wicked, for the "mighty and the mean. Do not be dis-"consolate: I am not one of the lawless "and cruel rovers of the desart; I know "the rules of civil life: I will fix your "ransom, give a passport to your mes-"senger, and perform my stipulation "with nice punctuality."

'You will easily believe that I was 'pleased with his courtesy: and finding 'that his predominant passion was desire 'of money, I began now to think my 'danger less, for I knew that no sum 'would be thought too great for the re-'lease of Pekuah. I told him, that he 'should have no reason to charge me 'with ingratitude, if I was used with 'kindness, and that any ransom which 'could be expected for a maid of com-'mon rank, would be paid; but that 'he must not persist to rate me as a 'princess. He said, he would consider 'what he should demand, and then smil-'ing, bowed and retired.

'Soon after the women came about 'me, each contending to be more offi-'cious than the other, and my maids 'themselves were served with reverence. 'We travelled onward by short journeys. 'On the fourth day the chief told me, 'that my ransom must be two hundred 'ounces of gold; which I not only pro-'mised him, but told him, that I would 'add fifty more, if I and my maids were 'honourably treated.

'I never knew the power of gold be-'fore. From that time I was the leader 'of the troop. The march of every day 'was longer or shorter as I commanded, 'and the tents were pitched where I 'chose to rest. We now had camels 'and other conveniences for travel, my 'own women were always at my side, 'and I amused myself with observing 'the manners of the vagrant nations, 'and with viewing remains of ancient 'edifices, with which these deserted 'countries appear to have been, in some 'distant age, lavishly embellished.

'The chief of the band was a man 'far from illiterate: he was able to tra-'vel by the stars or the compass, and 'had marked, in his erratick expedi-'tions, such places as are most worthy 'the notice of a passenger. He observed 'to me, that buildings are always best 'preserved in places little frequented, 'and difficult of access: for, when once 'a country declines from it's primitive 'splendour, the more inhabitants are 'left, the quicker ruin will be made. 'Walls supply stones more easily than 'quarries, and palaces and temples will 'be demolished, to make stables of gra-'nate, and cottages of porphyry.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

THE ADVENTURES OF PEKUAH CONTINUED.

'WE wandered about in this man-'ner for some weeks, whether, 'as our chief pretended, for my gratifi-'cation, or as I rather suspected, for 'some convenience of his own. I en-'deavoured to appear contented where 'sullenness and resentment would have 'been of no use, and that endeavour 'conduced much to the calmness of my 'mind; but my heart was always with 'Nekayah, and the troubles of the night 'much overbalanced the amusements of 'the day. My women, who threw all 'their cares upon their mistress, set their 'minds at ease from the time when they 'saw me treated with respect, and gave 'themselves up to the incidental alleviа-'tions of our fatigue without solicitude 'or sorrow. I was pleased with their 'pleasure, and animated with their con-'fidence. My condition had lost much

'of

'of it's terrour, since I found that the 'Arab ranged the country merely to 'get riches. Avarice is an uniform and 'tractable vice: other intellectual dis-'tempers are different in different con-'stitutions of mind; that which soothes 'the pride of one will offend the pride 'of another; but to the favour of the 'covetous there is a ready way; bring 'money and nothing is denied.

'At last we came to the dwelling of 'our chief, a strong and spacious house 'built with stone in an island of the Nile, 'which lies, as I was told, under the 'tropick. "Lady," said the Arab, "you shall rest after your journey a few "weeks in this place, where you are to "consider yourself as sovereign. My "occupation is war: I have therefore "chosen this obscure residence, from "which I can issue unexpected, and to "which I can retire unpersued. You "may now repose in security: here are "few pleasures, but here is no danger." 'He then led me into the inner apart-'ments, and seating me on the richest 'couch, bowed to the ground. His 'women, who considered me as a rival, 'looked on me with malignity; but be-'ing soon informed that I was a great 'lady detained only for my ransom, they 'began to vie with each other in obse-'quiousness and reverence.

'Being again comforted with new 'assurances of speedy liberty, I was for 'some days diverted from impatience by 'the novelty of the place. The turrets 'overlooked the country to a great dis-'tance, and afforded a view of many 'windings of the stream. In the day I 'wandered from one place to another, 'as the course of the sun varied the splen-'dour of the prospect, and saw many 'things which I had never seen before. 'The crocodiles and river-horses are 'common in this unpeopled region, and 'I often looked upon them with terrour, 'though I knew that they could not 'hurt me. For some time I expected 'to see mermaids and tritons, which, as 'Imlac has told me, the European tra-'vellers have stationed in the Nile, but 'no such beings ever appeared, and the 'Arab, when I enquired after them, 'laughed at my credulity.

'At night the Arab always attended 'me to a tower set apart for celestial ob-'servations, where he endeavoured to 'teach me the names and courses of the 'stars. I had no great inclination to 'this study, but an appearance of atten-'tion was necessary to please my instruc-'tor, who valued himself for his skill: 'and, in a little while, I found some em-'ployment requisite to beguile the tedi-'ousness of time, which was to be passed 'always amidst the same objects. I was 'weary of looking in the morning on 'things from which I had turned away 'weary in the evening: I therefore was 'at last willing to observe the stars ra-'ther than do nothing, but could not 'always compose my thoughts, and was 'very often thinking on Nekayah, when 'others imagined me contemplating the 'sky. Soon after the Arab went upon 'another expedition, and then my only 'pleasure was to talk with my maids 'about the accident by which we were 'carried away, and the happiness that 'we should all enjoy at the end of our 'captivity.'

'There were women in your Arab's 'fortress,' said the princess; 'why did 'you not make them your companions, 'enjoy their conversation, and partake 'their diversions? In a place where they 'found business or amusement, why 'should you alone sit corroded with idle 'melancholy? or why could not you 'bear, for a few months, that condi-'tion to which they were condemned 'for life?'

'The diversions of the women,' an-swered Pekuah, 'were only childish 'play, by which the mind, accustomed 'to stronger operations, could not be 'kept busy. I could do all which they 'delighted in doing by powers merely 'sensitive, while my intellectual facul-'ties were flown to Cairo. They ran 'from room to room as a bird hops from 'wire to wire in his cage. They danced 'for the sake of motion, as lambs frisk in 'a meadow. One sometimes pretended 'to be hurt, that the rest might be alarm-'ed; or hid herself, that another might 'seek her. Part of their time passed in 'watching the progress of light bodies 'that floated on the river, and part in 'marking the various forms into which 'clouds broke in the sky.

'Their business was only needle-'work, in which I and my maids some-'times helped them; but you know 'that the mind will easily straggle from 'the fingers, nor will you suspect that 'captivity and absence from Nekayah 'could receive solace from silken flowers.

'Nor was much satisfaction to be

'hoped

'hoped from their converſation: for of 'what could they be expected to talk? 'They had ſeen nothing; for they had 'lived from early youth in that narrow 'ſpot: of what they had not ſeen they 'could have no knowledge, for they 'could not read. They had no ideas 'but of the few things that were within 'their view, and had hardly names for 'any thing but their clothes and their 'food. As I bore a ſuperiour character, 'I was often called to terminate their 'quarrels, which I decided as equitably 'as I could. If it could have amuſed 'me to hear the complaints of each 'againſt the reſt, I might have been of'ten detained by long ſtories; but the 'motives of their animoſity were ſo ſmall, 'that I could not liſten without inter'cepting the tale.'

'How,' ſaid Raſſelas, 'can the Arab, 'whom you repreſented as a man of 'more than common accompliſhments, 'take any pleaſure in his ſeraglio, when 'it is filled only with women like theſe? 'Are they exquiſitely beautiful?'

'They do not,' ſaid Pekuah, 'want 'that unaffecting and ignoble beauty 'which may ſubſiſt without ſpritelineſs 'or ſublimity, without energy of thought 'or dignity of virtue. But to a man 'like the Arab ſuch beauty was only a 'flower caſually plucked and careleſsly 'thrown away. Whatever pleaſures he 'might find among them, they were 'not thoſe of friendſhip or ſociety. When 'they were playing about him he looked 'on them with inattentive ſuperiority: 'when they vied for his regard, he ſome'times turned away diſguſted. As they 'had no knowledge, their talk could 'take nothing from the tediouſneſs of 'life: as they had no choice, their fond'neſs, or appearance of fondneſs, excit'ed in him neither pride nor gratitude; 'he was not exalted in his own eſteem 'by the ſmiles of a woman who ſaw no 'other man, nor was much obliged by 'that regard, of which he could never 'know the ſincerity, and which he might 'often perceive to be exerted, not ſo 'much to delight him as to pain a rival. 'That which he gave, and they received, 'as love, was only a careleſs diſtribu'tion of ſuperfluous time, ſuch love as 'man can beſtow upon that which he 'deſpiſes, ſuch as has neither hope nor 'fear, neither joy nor ſorrow.'

'You have reaſon, lady, to think 'yourſelf happy,' ſaid Imlac, 'that you 'have been thus eaſily diſmiſſed. How 'could a mind, hungry for knowledge, 'be willing, in an intellectual famine, 'to loſe ſuch a banquet as Pekuah's 'converſation?'

'I am inclined to believe,' anſwered Pekuah, 'that he was for ſome time in 'ſuſpenſe; for, notwithſtanding his pro'miſe, whenever I propoſed to diſpatch 'a meſſenger to Cairo, he found ſome 'excuſe for delay. While I was detain'ed in his houſe he made many incur'ſions into the neighbouring countries, 'and, perhaps, he would have refuſed 'to diſcharge me, had his plunder been 'equal to his wiſhes. He returned al'ways courteous, related his adventures, 'delighted to hear my obſervations, and 'endeavoured to advance my acquaint'ance with the ſtars. When I impor'tuned him to ſend away my letters, he 'ſoothed me with profeſſions of honour 'and ſincerity; and, when I could be 'no longer decently denied, put his 'troop again in motion, and left me to 'govern in his abſence. I was much 'afflicted by this ſtudied procraſtination, 'and was ſometimes afraid that I ſhould 'be forgotten; that you would leave 'Cairo, and I muſt end my days in an 'iſland of the Nile.

'I grew at laſt hopeleſs and dejected, 'and cared ſo little to entertain him, that 'he for a while more frequently talked 'with my maids. That he ſhould fall 'in love with them, or with me, might 'have been equally fatal, and I was not 'much pleaſed with the growing friend'ſhip. My anxiety was not long; for, 'as I recovered ſome degree of cheer'fulneſs, he returned to me, and I could 'not forbear to deſpiſe my former un'eaſineſs.

'He ſtill delayed to ſend for my ran'ſom, and would, perhaps, never have 'determined, had not your agent found 'his way to him. The gold, which 'he would not fetch, he could not re'ject when it was offered. He haſ'tened to prepare for our journey hi'ther, like a man delivered from the 'pain of an inteſtine conflict. I took 'leave of my companions in the houſe, 'who diſmiſſed me with cold indiffe'rence.'

Nekayah having heard her favourite's relation, roſe and embraced her; and Raſſelas gave her an hundred ounces of gold, which ſhe preſented to the Arab for the fifty that were promiſed.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIX.

THE HISTORY OF A MAN OF LEARNING.

THEY returned to Cairo, and were so well pleased at finding themselves together, that none of them went much abroad. The prince began to love learning, and one day declared to Imlac, that he intended to devote himself to science, and pass the rest of his days in literary solitude.

'Before you make your final choice,' answered Imlac, 'you ought to examine 'it's hazards, and converse with some of 'those who are grown old in the com'pany of themselves. I have just left 'the observatory of one of the most 'learned astronomers in the world, who 'has spent forty years in unwearied at'tention to the motions and appearances 'of the celestial bodies, and has drawn 'out his soul in endless calculations. 'He admits a few friends once a month 'to hear his deductions and enjoy his 'discoveries. I was introduced as a man 'of knowledge worthy of his notice. 'Men of various ideas, and fluent con'versation, are commonly welcome to 'those whose thoughts have been long 'fixed upon a single point, and who 'find the images of other things stealing 'away. I delighted him with my re'marks; he smiled at the narrative of 'my travels, and was glad to forget the 'constellations, and descend for a mo'ment into the lower world.

'On the next day of vacation I re'newed my visit, and was so fortunate as 'to please him again. He relaxed from 'that time the severity of his rule, and 'permitted me to enter at my own choice. 'I found him always busy, and always 'glad to be relieved. As each knew 'much which the other was desirous of 'learning, we exchanged our notions 'with great delight. I perceived that I 'had every day more of his confidence, 'and always found new cause of ad'miration in the profundity of his mind. 'His comprehension is vast, his me'mory capacious and retentive, his dis'course is methodical, and his expression 'clear.

'His integrity and benevolence are 'equal to his learning. His deepest re'searches and most favourite studies are 'willingly interrupted for any opportu'nity of doing good by his counsel or his 'riches. To his closest retreat, at his 'most busy moments, all are admitted 'that want his assistance: "For "though I exclude idleness and plea"sure, I will never," says he, "bar my "doors against charity. To man is "permitted the contemplation of the "skies, but the practice of virtue is "commanded."

'Surely,' said the princess, 'this man 'is happy.'

'I visited him,' said Imlac, 'with 'more and more frequency, and was 'every time more enamoured of his con'versation: he was sublime without 'haughtiness, courteous without for'mality, and communicative without 'ostentation. I was at first, great prin'cess, of your opinion, thought him the 'happiest of mankind, and often con'gratulated him on the blessing that he 'enjoyed. He seemed to hear nothing 'with indifference but the praises of his 'condition, to which he always returned 'a general answer, and diverted the con'versation to some other topick.

'Amidst this willingness to be pleased, 'and labour to please, I had quickly 'reason to imagine that some painful 'sentiment pressed upon his mind. He 'often looked up earnestly towards the 'sun, and let his voice fall in the midst 'of his discourse. He would some'times, when we were alone, gaze upon 'me in silence with the air of a man 'who longed to speak what he was yet 'resolved to suppress. He would often 'send for me with vehement injunctions 'of haste, though, when I came to him, 'he had nothing extraordinary to say. 'And sometimes, when I was leaving 'him, would call me back, pause a few 'moments, and then dismiss me.

CHAP. XL.

THE ASTRONOMER DISCOVERS THE CAUSE OF HIS UNEASINESS.

'AT last the time came when the se'cret burst his reserve. We were 'sitting together last night in the turret 'of his house, watching the emersion of 'a satellite of Jupiter. A sudden tempest 'clouded the sky, and disappointed our 'observation. We sat a while silent in 'the dark, and then he addressed him'self to me in these words. "Imlac, I "have

" have long considered thy friendship as " the greatest blessing of my life. Integrity without knowledge is weak and " useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful. I " have found in thee all the qualities requisite for trust, benevolence, experience, and fortitude. I have long discharged an office which I must soon " quit at the call of nature, and shall rejoice in the hour of imbecility and " pain to devolve it upon thee."

' I thought myself honoured by this ' testimony, and protested, that whatever ' could conduce to his happiness would ' add likewise to mine.'

" Hear, Imlac, what thou wilt not " without difficulty credit. I have possessed for five years the regulation of " weather, and the distribution of the " seasons: the sun has listened to my " dictates, and passed from tropick to " tropick by my direction; the clouds, " at my call, have poured their waters, " and the Nile has overflowed at my " command; I have restrained the rage " of the dog-star, and mitigated the fervours of the crab. The winds alone, " of all the elemental powers, have hitherto refused my authority, and multitudes have perished by equinoctial " tempests, which I found myself unable to prohibit or restrain. I have " administered this great office with " exact justice, and made to the different nations of the earth an impartial " dividend of rain and sunshine. What " must have been the misery of half the " globe, if I had limited the clouds to " particular regions, or confined the sun " to either side of the equator?"

CHAP. XLI.

THE OPINION OF THE ASTRONOMER IS EXPLAINED AND JUSTIFIED.

' I Suppose he discovered in me, ' through the obscurity of the ' room, some tokens of amazement and ' doubt, for, after a short pause, he proceeded thus:

" Not to be easily credited will neither surprise nor offend me; for I am, " probably, the first of human beings to " whom this trust has been imparted. " Nor do I know whether to deem this " distinction a reward or punishment; " since I have possessed it I have been " far less happy than before, and nothing but the consciousness of good " intention could have enabled me to " support the weariness of unremitted " vigilance."

" How long, Sir," said I, " has this " great office been in your hands?"

" About ten years ago," said he, " my daily observations of the changes " of the sky led me to consider, whether, " if I had the power of the seasons, I " could confer greater plenty upon the " inhabitants of the earth. This contemplation fastened on my mind, and " I sat days and nights in imaginary " dominion, pouring upon this country " and that the showers of fertility, and " seconding every fall of rain with a due " proportion of sunshine. I had yet " only the will to do good, and did not " imagine that I should ever have the " power.

" One day, as I was looking on the " fields withering with heat, I felt in " my mind a sudden wish that I could " send rain on the southern mountains, " and raise the Nile to an inundation. " In the hurry of my imagination I " commanded rain to fall, and by comparing the time of my command with " that of the inundation, I found that " the clouds had listened to my lips."

" Might not some other cause," said I, " produce this concurrence? The Nile " does not always rise on the same day."

" Do not believe," said he with impatience, " that such objections could " escape me: I reasoned long against " my own conviction, and laboured " against truth with the utmost obstinacy. " I sometimes suspected myself of madness, and should not have dared to " impart this secret but to a man like " you, capable of distinguishing the " wonderful from the impossible, and " the incredible from the false."

" Why, Sir," said I, " do you call " that incredible, which you know, or " think you know, to be true?"

" Because," said he, " I cannot prove " it by any external evidence; and I " know too well the laws of demonstration to think that my conviction " ought to influence another, who cannot, like me, be conscious of it's force. " I, therefore, shall not attempt to gain " credit by disputation. It is sufficient " that I feel this power, that I have long " possessed, and every day exerted it. " But the life of man is short, the in-

" firmities of age increaſe upon me, and " the time will ſoon come, when the re- " gulator of the year muſt mingle with " the duſt. The care of appointing a " ſucceſſor has long diſturbed me; the " night and the day have been ſpent in " compariſons of all the characters which " have come to my knowledge, and I " have yet found none ſo worthy as thy- " ſelf.

CHAP. XLII.

THE ASTRONOMER LEAVES IMLAC HIS DIRECTIONS.

" HEAR, therefore, what I ſhall " impart with attention, ſuch " as the welfare of a world requires. If " the taſk of a king be conſidered as dif- " ficult, who has the care only of a few " millions, to whom he cannot do much " good or harm, what muſt be the an- " xiety of him, on whom depends the " action of the elements, and the great " gifts of light and heat!—Hear me " therefore with attention.

" I have diligently conſidered the " poſition of the earth and ſun, and " formed innumerable ſchemes in which " I changed their ſituation. I have " ſometimes turned aſide the axis of the " earth, and ſometimes varied the eclip- " tick of the ſun: but I have found it " impoſſible to make a diſpoſition by " which the world may be advantaged; " what one region gains, another loſes " by an imaginable alteration, even " without conſidering the diſtant parts " of the ſolar ſyſtem with which we are " unacquainted. Do not therefore, in " thy adminiſtration of the year, indulge " thy pride by innovation; do not pleaſe " thyſelf with thinking that thou " canſt make thyſelf renowned to all fu- " ture ages, by diſordering the ſeaſons. " The memory of miſchief is no deſir- " able fame. Much leſs will it become " thee to let kindneſs or intereſt prevail. " Never rob other countries of rain to " pour it on thine own. For us the " Nile is ſufficient."

' I promiſed, that when I poſſeſſed the ' power, I would uſe it with inflexible ' integrity; and he diſmiſſed me, preſ- ' ſing my hand. " My heart," ſaid he, " will be now at reſt, and my bene- " volence will no more deſtroy my quiet; " I have found a man of wiſdom and " virtue, to whom I can cheerfully be- " queath the inheritance of the ſun."

The prince heard this narration with very ſerious regard; but the princeſs ſmiled, and Pekuah convulſed herſelf with laughter. ' Ladies,' ſaid Imlac, ' to mock the heavieſt of human afflic- ' tions is neither charitable nor wiſe. ' Few can attain this man's knowledge, ' and few practiſe his virtues; but all ' may ſuffer his calamity. Of the un- ' certainties of our preſent ſtate, the moſt ' dreadful and alarming is the uncertain ' continuance of reaſon.'

The princeſs was recollected, and the favourite was abaſhed. Raſſelas, more deeply affected, inquired of Imlac, whether he thought ſuch maladies of the mind frequent, and how they were contracted?

CHAP. XLIII.

THE DANGEROUS PREVALENCE OF IMAGINATION.

' DISORDERS of intellect,' anſwered Imlac, ' happen much ' more often than ſuperficial obſervers ' will eaſily believe. Perhaps, if we ' ſpeak with rigorous exactneſs, no hu- ' man mind is in it's right ſtate. There ' is no man whoſe imagination does not ' ſometimes predominate over his rea- ' ſon, who can regulate his attention ' wholly by his will, and whoſe ideas ' will come and go at his command. No ' man will be found in whoſe mind airy ' notions do not ſometimes tyrannize, ' and force him to hope or fear beyond ' the limits of ſober probability. All ' power of fancy over reaſon is a degree ' of inſanity; but while this power is ' ſuch as we can controul and repreſs, it ' is not viſible to others, nor conſidered ' as any depravation of the mental fa- ' culties: it is not pronounced madneſs ' but when it becomes ungovernable, ' and apparently influences ſpeech or ' action.

' To indulge the power of fiction, ' and ſend imagination out upon the ' wing, is often the ſport of thoſe who ' delight too much in ſilent ſpeculation. ' When we are alone we are not always ' buſy; the labour of excogitation is too ' violent to laſt long; the ardour of in- ' quiry will ſometimes give way to idle- ' neſs or ſatiety. He who has nothing

' external

'external that can divert him, must find 'pleasure in his own thoughts, and must 'conceive himself what he is not; for 'who is pleased with what he is? He 'then expatiates in boundless futurity, 'and culls from all imaginable condi-'tions that which for the present mo-'ment he should most desire, amuses his 'desires with impossible enjoyments, and 'confers upon his pride unattainable 'dominion. The mind dances from 'scene to scene, unites all pleasures in all 'combinations, and riots in delights, 'which nature and fortune, with all 'their bounty, cannot bestow.

'In time, some particular train of 'ideas fixes the attention, all other in-'tellectual gratifications are rejected, 'the mind, in weariness or leisure, re-'curs constantly to the favourite con-'ception, and feasts on the luscious 'falsehood, whenever she is offended 'with the bitterness of truth. By de-'grees the reign of fancy is confirmed; 'she grows first imperious, and in time 'despotick. Then fictions begin to 'operate as realities, false opinions fasten 'upon the mind, and life passes in dreams 'of rapture or of anguish.

'This, Sir, is one of the dangers of 'solitude, which the hermit has con-'fessed not always to promote goodness, 'and the astronomer's misery has proved 'to be not always propitious to wis-'dom.'

'I will no more,' said the favourite, 'imagine myself the queen of Abissinia. 'I have often spent the hours, which 'the princess gave to my own disposal, 'in adjusting ceremonies and regulating 'the court; I have repressed the pride 'of the powerful, and granted the peti-'tions of the poor; I have built new 'palaces in more happy situations, plant-'ed groves upon the tops of mountains, 'and have exulted in the beneficence of 'royalty, till, when the princess entered, 'I had almost forgotten to bow down 'before her.'

'And I,' said the princess, 'will not 'allow myself any more to play the shep-'herdess in my waking dreams. I have 'often soothed my thoughts with the 'quiet and innocence of pastoral em-'ployments, till I have in my chamber 'heard the winds whistle, and the sheep 'bleat: sometimes freed the lamb en-'tangled in the thicket, and sometimes 'with my crook encountered the wolf. 'I have a dress like that of the villag[e] 'maids, which I put on to help my ima-'gination; and a pipe on which I play 'softly, and suppose myself followed by 'my flocks.'

'I will confess,' said the prince, 'an 'indulgence of fantastick delight more 'dangerous than yours. I have fre-'quently endeavoured to imagine the 'possibility of a perfect government, by 'which all wrong should be restrained, 'all vice reformed, and all the subjects 'preserved in tranquillity and inno-'cence. This thought produced innu-'merable schemes of reformation, and 'dictated many useful regulations and 'salutary edicts. This has been the 'sport, and sometimes the labour, of my 'solitude; and I start, when I think 'with how little anguish I once sup-'posed the death of my father and my 'brothers.'

'Such,' says Imlac, 'are the effects 'of visionary schemes: when we first 'form them we know them to be absurd, 'but familiarize them by degrees, and 'in time lose sight of their folly.'

CHAP. XLIV.

THEY DISCOURSE WITH AN OLD MAN.

THE evening was now far past, and they rose to return home. As they walked along the bank of the Nile, delighted with the beams of the moon quivering on the water, they saw at a small distance an old man, whom the prince had often heard in the assembly of the sages. 'Yonder,' said he, 'is one 'whose years have calmed his passions, 'but not clouded his reason: let us close 'the disquisitions of the night, by in-'quiring what are his sentiments of his 'own state, that we may know whether 'youth alone is to struggle with vexa-'tion, and whether any better hope re-'mains for the latter part of life.'

Here the sage approached and saluted them. They invited him to join their walk, and prattled a while, as acquaint-ance that had unexpectedly met one another. The old man was cheerful and talkative, and the way seemed short in his compay. He was pleased to find him-self not disregarded, accompanied them to their house, and, at the prince's re-

queſt, entered with them. They placed him in the ſeat of honour, and ſet wine and conſerves before him.

'Sir, ſaid the princeſs, 'an evening 'walk muſt give to a man of learning, 'like you, pleaſures which ignorance 'and youth can hardly conceive. You 'know the qualities and the cauſes of 'all that you behold, the laws by which 'the river flows, the periods in which 'the planets perform their revolutions. 'Every thing muſt ſupply you with con-'templation, and renew the conſciouſ-'neſs of your own dignity.'

'Lady,' anſwered he, 'let the gay 'and the vigorous expect pleaſure in 'their excurſions; it is enough that age 'can obtain eaſe. To me the world has 'loſt it's novelty: I look round, and ſee 'what I remember to have ſeen in hap-'pier days. I reſt againſt a tree, and 'conſider, that in the ſame ſhade I once 'diſputed upon the annual overflow of 'the Nile with a friend who is now 'ſilent in the grave. I caſt my eyes 'upwards, fix them on the changing 'moon, and think with pain on the vi-'ciſſitudes of life. I have ceaſed to 'take much delight in phyſical truth; 'for what have I to do with thoſe things 'which I am ſoon to leave?'

'You may at leaſt recreate yourſelf,' ſaid Imlac, 'with the recollection of an 'honourable and uſeful life, and en-'joy the praiſe which all agree to give 'you.'

'Praiſe,' ſaid the ſage, with a ſigh, 'is to an old man an empty ſound. I 'have neither mother to be delighted 'with the reputation of her ſon, nor 'wife to partake the honours of her 'huſband. I have outlived my friends 'and my rivals. Nothing is now of 'much importance; for I cannot extend 'my intereſt beyond myſelf. Youth is 'delighted with applauſe, becauſe it is 'conſidered as the earneſt of ſome fu-'ture good, and becauſe the proſpect of 'life is far extended: but to me, who 'am now declining to decrepitude, there 'is little to be feared from the malevo-'lence of men, and yet leſs to be hoped 'from their affection or eſteem. Some-'thing they may yet take away, but 'they can give me nothing. Riches 'would now be uſeleſs, and high em-'ployment would be pain. My retro-'ſpect of life recalls to my view many 'opportunities of good neglected, much 'time ſquandered upon trifles, and more 'loſt in idleneſs and vacancy. I leave 'many great deſigns unattempted, and 'many great attempts unfiniſhed. My 'mind is burdened with no heavy crime, 'and therefore I compoſe myſelf to 'tranquillity; endeavour to abſtract my 'thoughts from hopes and cares, which, 'though reaſon knows them to be vain, 'ſtill try to keep their old poſſeſſion of 'the heart; expect, with ſerene humility, 'that hour which nature cannot long de-'lay; and hope to poſſeſs, in a better 'ſtate, that happineſs which here I could 'not find, and that virtue which here I 'have not attained.'

He roſe and went away, leaving his audience not much elated with the hope of long life. The prince conſoled him-ſelf with remarking, that it was not rea-ſonable to be diſappointed by this ac-count; for age had never been conſidered as the ſeaſon of felicity, and if it was poſſible to be eaſy in decline and weak-neſs, it was likely that the days of vigour and alacrity might be happy: that the noon of life might be bright, if the even-ing could be calm.

The princeſs ſuſpected that age was querulous and malignant, and delighted to repreſs the expectations of thoſe who had newly entered the world. She had ſeen the poſſeſſors of eſtates look with envy on their heirs, and known many who enjoyed pleaſure no longer than they can confine it to themſelves.

Pekuah conjectured, that the man was older than he appeared, and was willing to impute his complaints to de-lirious dejection: or elſe ſuppoſed that he had been unfortunate, and was there-fore diſcontented: 'For nothing,' ſaid ſhe, 'is more common, than to call our 'own condition the condition of life.'

Imlac, who had no deſire to ſee them depreſſed, ſmiled at the comforts which they could ſo readily procure to them-ſelves, and remembered, that at the ſame age, he was equally confident of un-mingled proſperity, and equally fertile of conſolatory expedients. He forbore to force upon them unwelcome know-ledge, which time itſelf would too ſoon impreſs. The princeſs and her lady retired; the madneſs of the aſtronomer hung upon their minds, and they de-ſired Imlac to enter upon his office, and delay next morning the riſing of the ſun.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLV.

THE PRINCESS AND PEKUAH VISIT THE ASTRONOMER.

THE princeſs and Pekuah having talked in private of Imlac's aſtronomer, thought his character at once ſo amiable and ſo ſtrange, that they could not be ſatisfied without a nearer knowledge; and Imlac was requeſted to find the means of bringing them together.

This was ſomewhat difficult; the philoſopher had never received any viſits from women, though he lived in a city that had in it many Europeans who followed the manners of their own countries, and many from other parts of the world, that lived there with European liberty. The ladies would not be refuſed, and ſeveral ſchemes were propoſed for the accompliſhment of their deſign. It was propoſed to introduce them as ſtrangers in diſtreſs, to whom the ſage was always acceſſible; but, after ſome deliberation, it appeared, that by this artifice no acquaintance could be formed, for their converſation would be ſhort, and they could not decently importune him often. 'This,' ſaid Raſſelas, 'is 'true; but I have yet a ſtronger ob'jection againſt the miſrepreſentation of 'your ſtate. I have always conſidered 'it as treaſon againſt the great republick 'of human nature, to make any man's 'virtues the means of deceiving him, 'whether on great or little occaſions. 'All impoſture weakens confidence, and 'chills benevolence. When the ſage 'finds that you are not what you ſeemed, 'he will feel the reſentment natural to a 'man who, conſcious of great abilities, 'diſcovers that he has been tricked by 'underſtandings meaner than his own, 'and, perhaps, the diſtruſt, which he 'can never afterwards wholly lay aſide, 'may ſtop the voice of counſel, and cloſe 'the hand of charity; and where will 'you find the power of reſtoring his be'nefactions to mankind, or his peace 'to himſelf?'

To this no reply was attempted, and Imlac began to hope that their curioſity would ſubſide; but, next day, Pekuah told him, ſhe had now found an honeſt pretence for a viſit to the aſtronomer, for ſhe would ſolicit permiſſion to continue under him the ſtudies in which ſhe had been initiated by the Arab, and the princeſs might go with her either as a fellow-ſtudent, or becauſe a woman could not decently come alone. 'I am 'afraid,' ſaid Imlac, 'that he will be 'ſoon weary of your company: men 'advanced far in knowledge do not 'love to repeat the elements of their art, 'and I am not certain that even of the 'elements, as he will deliver them con'nected with inferences, and mingled 'with reflections, you are a very capa'ble auditreſs.'—'That,' ſaid Pekuah, 'muſt be my care: I aſk of you only 'to take me thither. My knowledge is, 'perhaps, more than you imagine it, and, 'by concurring always with his opi'nions, I ſhall make him think it greater 'than it is.'

The aſtronomer, in purſuance of this reſolution, was told, that a foreign lady, travelling in ſearch of knowledge, had heard of his reputation, and was deſirous to become his ſcholar. The uncommonneſs of the propoſal raiſed at once his ſurpriſe and curioſity; and when, after a ſhort deliberation, he conſented to admit her, he could not ſtay without impatience till the next day.

The ladies dreſſed themſelves magnificently, and were attended by Imlac to the aſtronomer, who was pleaſed to ſee himſelf approached with reſpect by perſons of ſo ſplendid an appearance. In the exchange of the firſt civilities he was timorous and baſhful; but when the talk became regular, he recollected his powers, and juſtified the character which Imlac had given. Inquiring of Pekuah, what could have turned her inclination towards aſtronomy? he received from her a hiſtory of her adventure at the pyramid, and of the time paſſed in the Arab's iſland. She told her tale with eaſe and elegance, and her converſation took poſſeſſion of his heart. The diſcourſe was then turned to aſtronomy. Pekuah diſplayed what ſhe knew: he looked upon her as a prodigy of genius, and entreated her not to deſiſt from a ſtudy which ſhe had ſo happily begun.

They came again and again, and were every time more welcome than before. The ſage endeavoured to amuſe them, that they might prolong their viſits, for he found his thoughts grow brighter in their company; the clouds of ſolicitude vaniſhed by degrees, as he forced himſelf to entertain them, and he grieved when

when he was left at their departure to his old employment of regulating the seasons.

The princess and her favourite had now watched his lips for several months, and could not catch a single word from which they could judge whether he continued, or not, in the opinion of his preternatural commission. They often contrived to bring him to an open declaration; but he easily eluded all their attacks, and on which side soever they pressed him, escaped from them to some other topick.

As their familiarity increased, they invited him often to the house of Imlac, where they distinguished him by extraordinary respect. He began gradually to delight in sublunary pleasures. He came early, and departed late; laboured to recommend himself by assiduity and compliance; excited their curiosity after new arts, that they might still want his assistance; and when they made any excursion of pleasure or inquiry, entreated to attend them.

By long experience of his integrity and wisdom, the prince and his sister were convinced that he might be trusted without danger; and lest he should draw any false hopes from the civilities which he received, discovered to him their condition, with the motives of their journey; and required his opinion on the choice of life.

'Of the various conditions which the 'world spreads before you, which you 'shall prefer,' said the sage, 'I am not 'able to instruct you. I can only tell 'that I have chosen wrong. I have 'passed my time in study without ex'perience; in the attainment of sciences 'which can, for the most part, be but 'remotely useful to mankind. I have 'purchased knowledge at the expence of 'all the common comforts of life: I 'have missed the endearing elegance of 'female friendship, and the happy com'merce of domestick tenderness. If I 'have obtained any prerogatives above 'other students, they have been accom'panied with fear, disquiet, and scru'pulosity; but even of these prerogatives, 'whatever they were, I have, since my 'thoughts have been diversified by more 'intercourse with the world, begun to 'question the reality. When I have 'been for a few days lost in pleasing 'dissipation, I am always tempted to 'think that my inquiries have ended in 'error, and that I have suffered much, 'and suffered it in vain.'

Imlac was delighted to find that the sage's understanding was breaking through it's mists, and resolved to detain him from the planets till he should forget his task of ruling them, and reason should recover it's original influence.

From this time the astronomer was received into familiar friendship, and partook of all their projects and pleasures: his respect kept him attentive, and the activity of Rasselas did not leave much time unengaged. Something was always to be done; the day was spent in making observations which furnished talk for the evening, and the evening was closed with a scheme for the morrow.

The sage confessed to Imlac, that since he had mingled in the gay tumults of life, and divided his hours by a succession of amusements, he found the conviction of his authority over the skies fade gradually from his mind, and began to trust less to an opinion which he never could prove to others, and which he now found subject to variation, from causes in which reason had no part. 'If I 'am accidentally left alone for a few 'hours,' said he, 'my inveterate per'suasion rushes upon my soul, and my 'thoughts are chained down by some 'irresistible violence; but they are soon 'disentangled by the prince's conversa'tion, and instantaneously released at 'the entrance of Pekuah. I am like a 'man habitually afraid of spectres, who 'is set at ease by a lamp, and wonders 'at the dread which haraſſed him in the 'dark; yet, if his lamp be extinguished, 'feels again the terrours which he knows 'that when it is light he shall feel no 'more. But I am sometimes afraid lest 'I indulge my quiet by criminal negli'gence, and voluntarily forget the great 'charge with which I am intrusted. If 'I favour myself in a known error, or 'am determined by my own ease in a 'doubtful question of this importance, 'how dreadful is my crime!'

'No disease of the imagination,' answered Imlac, 'is so difficult of cure, 'as that which is complicated with the 'dread of guilt: fancy and conscience 'then act interchangeably upon us, and 'so often shift their places, that the il'lusions of one are not distinguished from 'the dictates of the other. If fancy 'presents

'presents images not moral or religious, 'the mind drives them away when they 'give it pain; but when melancholick 'notions take the form of duty, they 'lay hold on the faculties without op-'position, because we are afraid to ex-'clude or banish them. For this reason 'the superstitious are often melancholy, 'and the melancholy almost always su-'perstitious.

'But do not let the suggestions of 'timidity overpower your better reason: 'the danger of neglect can be but as the 'probability of the obligation, which 'when you consider it with freedom, 'you find very little, and that little 'growing every day less. Open your 'heart to the influence of the light, 'which, from time to time, breaks in 'upon you: when scruples importune 'you, which you in your lucid moments 'know to be vain, do not stand to par-'ley, but fly to business or to Pekuah; 'and keep this thought always preva-'lent, that you are only one atom of 'the mass of humanity, and have neither 'such virtue nor vice, as that you should 'be singled out for supernatural favours 'or afflictions.'

CHAP. XLVI.

THE PRINCE ENTERS, AND BRINGS A NEW TOPICK.

'ALL this,' said the astronomer, 'I have often thought, but my 'reason has been so long subjugated by 'an uncontroulable and overwhelming 'idea, that it durst not confide in it's 'own decisions. I now see how fatally 'I betrayed my quiet, by suffering chi-'meras to prey upon me in secret; but 'melancholy shrinks from communica-'tion, and I never found a man before, 'to whom I could impart my troubles, 'though I had been certain of relief. I 'rejoice to find my own sentiments con-'firmed by yours, who are not easily 'deceived, and can have no motive or 'purpose to deceive. I hope that time 'and variety will dissipate the gloom 'that has so long surrounded me, and 'the latter part of my days will be spent 'in peace.'

'Your learning and virtue,' said Imlac, 'may justly give you hopes.'

Rasselas then entered with the princess and Pekuah, and inquired, whether they had contrived any new diversion for the next day? 'Such,' said Nekayah, 'is 'the state of life, that none are happy 'but by the anticipation of change: the 'change itself is nothing; when we have 'made it, the next wish is to change 'again. The world is not yet exhaust-'ed; let me see something to-morrow 'which I never saw before.'

'Variety,' said Rasselas, 'is so ne-'cessary to content, that even the happy 'valley disgusted me by the recurrence 'of it's luxuries; yet I could not forbear 'to reproach myself with impatience, 'when I saw the monks of St. Anthony 'support, without complaint, a life, 'not of uniform delight, but uniform 'hardship.'

'Those men,' answered Imlac, 'are 'less wretched in their silent convent 'than the Abissinian princes in their pri-'son of pleasure. Whatever is done 'by the monks is incited by an ade-'quate and reasonable motive. Their 'labour supplies them with necessaries; 'it therefore cannot be omitted, and is 'certainly rewarded. Their devotion 'prepares them for another state, and 'reminds them of it's approach, while 'it fits them for it. Their time is re-'gularly distributed; one duty succeeds 'another, so that they are not left open 'to the distraction of unguided choice, 'nor lost in the shades of listless inac-'tivity. There is a certain task to be 'performed at an appropriated hour; 'and their toils are cheerful, because 'they consider them as acts of piety, by 'which they are always advancing to-'wards endless felicity.'

'Do you think,' said Nekayah, 'that 'the monastick rule is a more holy and 'less imperfect state than any other? 'May not he equally hope for future 'happiness who converses openly with 'mankind, who succours the distressed 'by his charity, instructs the ignorant 'by his learning, and contributes by his 'industry to the general system of life; 'even though he should omit some of 'the mortifications which are practised 'in the cloister, and allow himself such 'harmless delights as his condition may 'place within his reach?'

'This,' said Imlac, 'is a question 'which has long divided the wise, and 'perplexed the good. I am afraid to 'decide on either part. He that lives 'well in the world is better than he that 'lives well in a monastery. But, per-

'haps,

'haps, every one is not able to ſtem the 'temptations of publick life; and if he 'cannot conquer, he may properly re-'treat. Some have little power to do 'good, and have likewiſe little ſtrength 'to reſiſt evil. Many are weary of their 'conflicts with adverſity, and are will-'ing to eject thoſe paſſions which have 'long buſied them in vain. And many 'are diſmiſſed by age and diſeaſes from 'the more laborious duties of ſociety. 'In monaſteries the weak and timorous 'may be happily ſheltered, the weary 'may repoſe, and the penitent may me-'ditate. Thoſe retreats of prayer and 'contemplation have ſomething ſo con-'genial to the mind of man, that, per-'haps, there is ſcarcely one that does 'not purpoſe to cloſe his life in pious 'abſtraction with a few aſſociates ſerious 'as himſelf.'

'Such,' ſaid Pekuah, 'has often been 'my wiſh, and I have heard the prin-'ceſs declare, that ſhe ſhould not will-'ingly die in a crowd.'

'The liberty of uſing harmleſs plea-'ſures,' proceeded Imlac, 'will not be 'diſputed; but it is ſtill to be examined 'what pleaſures are harmleſs. The evil 'of any pleaſure that Nekayah can image 'is not in the act itſelf, but in it's con-'ſequences. Pleaſure, in itſelf harm-'leſs, may become miſchievous, by en-'dearing to us a ſtate which we know 'to be tranſient and probatory, and 'withdrawing our thoughts from that, 'of which every hour brings us nearer 'to the beginning, and of which no 'length of time will bring us to the end. 'Mortification is not virtuous in itſelf, 'nor has any other uſe, but that it diſ-'engages us from the allurements of 'ſenſe. In the ſtate of future perfec-'tion, to which we all aſpire, there will 'be pleaſure without danger, and ſecu-'rity without reſtraint.'

The princeſs was ſilent, and Raſſelas, turning to the aſtronomer, aſked him, whether he could not delay her retreat, by ſhewing her ſomething which ſhe had not ſeen before?

'Your curioſity,' ſaid the ſage, 'has 'been ſo general, and your purſuit of 'knowledge ſo vigorous, that novelties 'are not now very eaſily to be found: 'but what you can no longer procure 'from the living may be given by the 'dead. Among the wonders of this 'country are the catacombs, or the an-'cient repoſitories, in which the bodies 'of the earlieſt generations were lodged, 'and where, by the virtue of the gums 'which embalmed them, they yet re-'main without corruption.'

'I know not,' ſaid Raſſelas, 'what 'pleaſure the ſight of the catacombs can 'afford; but, ſince nothing elſe offered, 'I am reſolved to view them, and ſhall 'place this with many other things 'which I have done, becauſe I would 'do ſomething.'

They hired a guard of horſemen, and the next day viſited the catacombs. When they were about to deſcend into the ſepulchral caves—'Pekuah,' ſaid the princeſs, 'we are now again invading the 'habitations of the dead; I know that 'you will ſtay behind; let me find you 'ſafe when I return.'—'No, I will not 'be left,' anſwered Pekuah; 'I will go 'down between you and the prince.'

They then all deſcended, and roved with wonder through the labyrinth of ſubterraneous paſſages, where the bodies were laid in rows on either ſide.

CHAP. XLVII.

IMLAC DISCOURSES ON THE NATURE OF THE SOUL.

'WHAT reaſon,' ſaid the prince, 'can be given, why the Egyp-'tians ſhould thus expenſively preſerve 'thoſe carcaſes which ſome nations con-'ſume with fire, others lay to mingle 'with the earth, and all agree to remove 'from their ſight, as ſoon as decent 'rites can be performed?'

'The original of ancient cuſtoms,' ſaid Imlac, 'is commonly unknown; 'for the practice often continues when 'the cauſe has ceaſed; and concerning 'ſuperſtitious ceremonies it is vain to 'conjecture; for what reaſon did not 'dictate, reaſon cannot explain. I 'have long believed that the practice 'of embalming aroſe only from tender-'neſs to the remains of relations or 'friends, and to this opinion I am more 'inclined, becauſe it ſeems impoſſible 'that this care ſhould have been general: 'had all the dead been embalmed, 'their repoſitories muſt in time have 'been more ſpacious than the dwellings 'of the living. I ſuppoſe only the rich 'or honourable were ſecured from cor-'ruption, and the reſt left to the courſe 'of nature.

'But

'But it is commonly supposed that the Egyptians believed the soul to live as long as the body continued undissolved, and therefore tried this method of eluding death.'

'Could the wise Egyptians,' said Nekayah, 'think so grossly of the soul? If the soul could once survive it's separation, what could it afterwards receive or suffer from the body?'

'The Egyptians would doubtless think erroneously,' said the astronomer, 'in the darkness of heathenism, and the first dawn of philosophy. The nature of the soul is still disputed amidst all our opportunities of clearer knowledge: some yet say, that it may be material, who, nevertheless, believe it to be immortal.'

'Some,' answered Imlac, 'have indeed said that the soul is material, but I can scarcely believe that any man has thought it, who knew how to think; for all the conclusions of reason enforce the immateriality of mind, and all the notices of sense and investigations of science concur to prove the unconsciousness of matter.

'It was never supposed that cogitation is inherent in matter, or that every particle is a thinking being. Yet, if any part of matter be devoid of thought, what part can we suppose to think? Matter can differ from matter only in form, density, bulk, motion, and direction of motion: to which of these, however varied or combined, can consciousness be annexed? To be round or square, to be solid or fluid, to be great or little, to be moved slowly or swiftly one way or another, are modes of material existence; all equally alien from the nature of cogitation. If matter be once without thought, it can only be made to think by some new modification, but all the modifications which it can admit are equally unconnected with cogitative powers.'

'But the materialists,' said the astronomer, 'urge that matter may have qualities with which we are unacquainted.'

'He who will determine,' returned Imlac, 'against that which he knows, because there may be something which he knows not; he that can set hypothetical possibility against acknowledged certainty, is not to be admitted among reasonable beings. All that we know of matter is, that matter is inert, senseless, and lifeless; and if this conviction cannot be opposed but by referring us to something that we know not, we have all the evidence that human intellect can admit. If that which is known may be overruled by that which is unknown, no being, not omniscient, can arrive at certainty.'

'Yet let us not,' said the astronomer, 'too arrogantly limit the Creator's power.'

'It is no limitation of omnipotence,' replied the poet, 'to suppose that one thing is not consistent with another, that the same proposition cannot be at once true and false, that the same number cannot be even and odd, that cogitation cannot be conferred on that which is created incapable of cogitation.'

'I know not,' said Nekayah, 'any great use of this question. Does that immateriality, which, in my opinion, you have sufficiently proved, necessarily include eternal duration?'

'Of immateriality,' said Imlac, 'our ideas are negative, and therefore obscure. Immateriality seems to imply a natural power of perpetual duration as a consequence of exemption from all causes of decay: whatever perishes is destroyed by the solution of it's contexture, and separation of it's parts; nor can we conceive how that which has no parts, and therefore admits no solution, can be naturally corrupted or impaired.'

'I know not,' said Rasselas, 'how to conceive any thing without extension; what is extended must have parts, and you allow, that whatever has parts may be destroyed.'

'Consider your own conceptions,' replied Imlac, 'and the difficulty will be less. You will find substance without extension. An ideal form is no less real than material bulk: yet an ideal form has no extension. It is no less certain, when you think on a pyramid, that your mind possesses the idea of a pyramid, than that the pyramid itself is standing. What space does the idea of a pyramid occupy more than the idea of a grain of corn? or how can either idea suffer laceration? As is the effect, such is the cause: as thought, such is the power that thinks; a power impassive and indiscerptible.'

'But the Being,' said Nekayah, 'whom I fear to name, the Being which 'made the soul, can destroy it.'

'He, surely, can destroy it,' answered Imlac, 'since, however unperishable, 'it receives from a superiour nature it's 'power of duration. That it will not 'perish by any inherent cause of decay, 'or principle of corruption, may be 'shewn by philosophy; but philosophy 'can tell no more. That it will not 'be annihilated by him that made it, 'we must humbly learn from higher 'authority.'

The whole assembly stood awhile silent and collected. 'Let us return,' said Rasselas, 'from this scene of mor-'tality. How gloomy would be these 'mansions of the dead to him who did 'not know that he should never die; 'that what now acts shall continue it's 'agency, and what now thinks shall 'think on for ever! Those that lie here 'stretched before us, the wise and the 'powerful of ancient times, warn us to 'remember the shortness of our present 'state: they were, perhaps, snatched 'away while they were busy like us in 'the choice of life.'

'To me,' said the princess, 'the choice 'of life is become less important; I 'hope hereafter to think only on the 'choice of eternity.'

They then hastened out of the caverns, and, under the protection of their guard, returned to Cairo.

CHAP. XLVIII.

THE CONCLUSION, IN WHICH NOTHING IS CONCLUDED.

IT was now the time of the inundation of the Nile: a few days after their visit to the catacombs, the river began to rise.

They were confined to their house. The whole region being under water gave them no invitation to any excursions, and, being well supplied with materials for talk, they diverted themselves with comparisons of the different forms of life which they had observed, and with various schemes of happiness which each of them had formed.

Pekuah was never so much charmed with any place as the convent of St. Anthony, where the Arab restored her to the princess, and wished only to fill it with pious maidens, and to be made prioress of the order: she was weary of expectation and disgust, and would gladly be fixed in some unvariable state.

The princess thought, that of all sublunary things, knowledge was the best: she desired first to learn all sciences, and then purposed to found a college of learned women, in which she would preside, that, by conversing with the old, and educating the young, she might divide her time between the acquisition and communication of wisdom, and raise up for the next age models of prudence, and patterns of piety.

The prince desired a little kingdom, in which he might administer justice in his own person, and see all the parts of government with his own eyes; but he could never fix the limits of his dominion, and was always adding to the number of his subjects.

Imlac and the astronomer were contented to be driven along the stream of life, without directing their course to any particular port.

Of these wishes that they had formed, they well knew that none could be obtained. They deliberated awhile what was to be done, and resolved, when the inundation should cease, to return to Abissinia.

FINIS.

HENRIETTA.

BY MRS. LENNOX.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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M DCC LXXXVII.

Dedication to the Second Edition.

TO HER GRACE

THE DUTCHESS OF NEWCASTLE.

MADAM,

THE condeſcenſion and benignity with which your Grace has hitherto favoured my performances and attempts, have at laſt given me boldneſs enough to intreat your patronage for a little novel.

Thoſe to whom this book is new, will expect the name of ſuch a patroneſs to be followed by ſome work of deep reſearch and elevated dignity; but they whoſe nearer approaches to your Grace, have enabled them to diſtinguiſh your private virtues, will not be diſappointed when they find it recommended only by purity and innocence. To obtain the approbation of a judgment like yours, it is neceſſary to mean well; and, to gain kindneſs from ſuch benevolence, to mean well is commonly ſufficient.

Had your Grace reſolved only to countenance thoſe who could have enlarged your knowledge, or refined your ſentiments, few could have aſpired to the honour of your notice, and far had I been removed from all hope of the favours which I have enjoyed, and the expectations which I have been permitted to indulge. But true greatneſs is always acceſſible, and pride will never be confounded with dignity by thoſe who remember that your Grace has admitted this addreſs from,

MADAM,

Your Grace's moſt obliged,

And moſt devoted Servant,

CHARLOTTE LENNOX.

LONDON,
Nov. 20, 1760.

HENRIETTA.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

BOOK THE FIRST.

CHAP. I.

WHICH INTRODUCES OUR HEROINE TO THE ACQUAINTANCE OF THE READER IN NO VERY ADVANTAGEOUS SITUATION.

ABOUT the middle of July, 17—, when the Windsor stage-coach with the accustomed number of passengers was proceeding on it's way to London, a young woman genteelly dressed, with a small parcel tied up in her handkerchief, hastily bolted from the shelter of a large tree near the road; and calling to the coachman to stop for a moment, asked him, if he could let her have a place. The man, although he well knew his vehicle was already sufficiently crouded, yet being desirous of appropriating this supernumerary fare to himself, replied, that he did not doubt but he could find room for her; and, jumping off his box, begged the company to sit close, and give the young woman a place.

'What do you mean?' said a jolly fat woman, with a face as red as scarlet; 'Have you not got your usual number 'of passengers? Do you think we will 'be stifled with heat to put money into 'your pocket?'—'There is room 'enough for such a slender young body 'as this,' said the coachman, 'if you 'would but sit closer.'

'Sit closer!' repeated the dame, and spreading her cloaths; 'don't you see 'we are crouded to death? How dare 'you pretend to impose another pas-'senger upon us, when your coach is 'already full?'

'Well,' said a tall lean woman, who sat next her, 'this is the first time I 'ever travelled in a stage coach, and 'truly I am sick of it already. There 'is no bearing the insults one is exposed 'to in these carriages. Prithee, young 'woman,' pursued she, with an air of great contempt, 'go about your bu-'siness, you see there is no room for 'you—And do you, fellow, get on your 'box, and drive on.'

'*Fellor* me no *fellors*,' said the coachman, in a surly tone, 'I won't drive 'till I please. Who are you, pray, 'that takes so much upon you to order 'me?'

'Who am I, you saucy jack-a-napes,' said the lady, 'a person that—— but I 'shall not demean myself so much as to 'tell you who I am: it is my misfor-'tune to be stuffed up in a stage-coach 'at present—what I have never been 'used to, I assure you.'

'Good lack-a-day!' said the fat gentlewoman, with a sneer, 'a great mis-'fortune truly—I would have you to 'know, Madam, your betters ride in 'stage coaches. Here's a coil indeed 'with such would-be-gentry!'

'Good woman,' said the other, with an affected calmness, 'pray don't direct 'your

'your impertinent discourse to me; I 'have nothing to say to you.'

'No more a good woman than your-'self,' said the plump lady, with a face doubly inflamed with rage; 'I scorn 'your words.'

'Very likely,' said a grave man, who sat on the opposite side, 'but I wish it was 'possible to make room for the young 'gentlewoman.'—'Ah! God bless 'your honour,' said the coachman, 'I 'thought you could not find in your 'heart to let such a pretty young wo-'man as this walk.'

'Pretty!' exclaimed the haughty lady, 'you are a fine judge of beauty in-'deed!—But I will not submit to be 'crouded, fellow: so you and your 'pretty passenger may ride on the coach-'box, if you please.'

'Nay, since you come to that,' says the fat gentlewoman, 'I am resolved 'you shall not have your own way. 'The young woman may be as good as 'you; and she shall not be obliged to 'ride on the coach-box. So open the 'door, coachman,' said she, shoving her antagonist at the same time with all her force; 'here is room enough.'

A young gentlewoman in a riding-habit, who sat on the same side, but next the window, declared that she was willing to give part of her seat to the stranger; and begged the haughty lady to yield. 'Poh!' said the rosy matron, 'don't 'stand begging and praying her; since 'you are on my side, we will be too hard 'for her, I warrant you.' Saying this, she put one of her huge arms round the young woman's waist; and thus reinforced, shoved her neighbour so forcibly against the other window, that she cried out with pain and vexation.

The young lady without, who had been the occasion of this contest, and who had hitherto stood silent, with her hat over her eyes, alarmed by the screams of her foe, raised her head; and in a tone of voice so sweet, as immediately fixed the attention of the whole company, intreated them not to quarrel upon her account: It was indeed, she said, of great consequence to her to be admitted, but she would not continue to desire it, since her request had produced so much uneasiness among them.

The passengers who occupied the other side of the coach, were two men and a woman big with child; which circumstance had made it impossible for the men to offer her a seat with them, for fear of incommoding the pregnant woman. But the youngest of the men having now got a glimpse of the stranger's face, declared that the ladies might make themselves easy; for he would resign his seat; adding, that he was extremely glad he had an opportunity of obliging such a handsome lady. He then jumped out of the coach, and taking the stranger's hand to help her in, stared confidently under her hat, which put her into a little confusion: however, she thanked him very politely, and accepted his offer; but not without expressing some concern for the manner in which he would dispose of himself.

'Oh! Madam,' said the coachman, 'the gentleman may sit upon the box 'with me, and he will have the pleasure 'of viewing the beautiful prospects all 'the way we go.'—'I shall see none so 'beautiful,' said the young fellow, 'as 'what they who remain in the coach will 'behold.'

The fair stranger now blushed more than before, and being willing to avoid any farther speeches of this sort, she hastily got into the coach, thanked the young man a second time, who having seen her seated, placed himself by the coachman on the box, and they proceeded on their journey.

CHAP. II.

THE COMMENCEMENT OF A VIOLENT FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN TWO YOUNG LADIES, WHICH HAS THE USUAL CONSEQUENCES, A COMMUNICATION OF SECRETS, BY WHICH THE READER IS LET INTO PART OF HENRIETTA'S STORY.

A Profound silence now prevailed among the company in the coach; the eyes of all were fastened upon the fair stranger, who appeared wholly insensible of the scrutinizing looks of her fellow-travellers. Something within herself seemed to engross all her thoughts; and although, by her eyes being constantly turned towards the windows of the coach, it might be imagined the passing objects drew her attention, yet their fixed looks too plainly indicated that they were beheld without observation. Her person, though full of charms, and the easy gracefulness of her air, impressed

preſſed leſs reſpect for her on the minds of the women, than the elegance of her morning-dreſs, which they were now at leiſure to conſider. Her gown was a white ſprigged muſlin, extremely fine, through which ſhone a rich blue Mantua ſilk petticoat: her cap, handkerchief, and ruffles, were trimmed with fine Bruſſels lace; her apron had a broad border round it of Dreſden work; and a white luteſtring hat ſhaded her charming face, which ſhe was ſolicitous to conceal from view.

The melancholy with which ſhe ſeemed oppreſſed, conciliated to her the goodwill of her female fellow-travellers, though from very different ſentiments. The haughty lady, who had refuſed to let her have a place in the coach, found her envy and ill-nature inſenſibly ſubſide, by the conſideration that this ſtranger was probably more unhappy than herſelf.

The luſty matron, pleaſed that, by inſiſting upon receiving her, ſhe had conferred an obligation on one who appeared to be of a rank above her own, enjoyed her preſent ſuperiority, and pitied her from the overflowings of gratified pride.

The young lady in the riding-habit, whoſe vanity had been a little mortified at ſeeing herſelf aſſociated in a journey with perſons whom ſhe conceived to be very unfit company for her, thought herſelf very happy in the acquiſition of ſo genteel a fellow-traveller; and as ſhe had not deigned to open her mouth before, from an opinion of the meanneſs of her company, ſhe now made herſelf amends for her ſilence, by addreſſing a profuſion of civil ſpeeches to the fair ſtranger, who replied to every thing ſhe ſaid with extreme politeneſs, but with an air that ſhewed her heart was not at eaſe.

The paſſengers being ſet down at different places, Miſs Courteney, for that was the name of our fair adventurer, remained alone with the young lady in the coach. This circumſtance ſeemed to rouze her from a deep reverie, in which ſhe had been wholly abſorbed during the laſt half hour; and looking earneſtly at her companion—'Ah! Madam,' ſaid ſhe, in a moſt affecting accent, 'and 'when am I to loſe you?'—'I ſhall 'leave you in a few minutes,' ſaid the lady; 'for I am going no farther than 'Hammerſmith.'—'Lord bleſs me!' ſaid Miſs Courteney, lifting up her fine eyes ſwimming in tears, 'what ſhall I 'do? what will become of me?'

This exclamation gave great ſurprize to the other lady, who from ſeveral circumſtances had conceived that there was ſome myſtery in her caſe. 'You ſeem 'uneaſy,' ſaid ſhe to Miſs Courteney; 'pray let me know if it is in my power 'to ſerve you.'

This kind requeſt had ſuch an effect on the tender heart of Miſs Courteney, that ſhe burſt into tears, and for a few moments was unable to anſwer; when the lady preſſing her to ſpeak freely—'I 'am an unhappy creature, Madam,' ſaid ſhe, ſighing; 'and am flying from the 'only perſon in the world upon whom 'I have any dependence. I will make 'no ſcruple to truſt you with my ſecret. 'Did you ever hear of Lady Meadows,' purſued ſhe, 'the widow of Sir John 'Meadows?'

'I know a lady who is acquainted 'with her,' ſaid the other; 'ſhe is a wo-'man of faſhion and fortune.'

'Lady Meadows is my relation,' reſumed Miſs Courteney; 'ſhe took me, 'a poor helpleſs orphan, under her pro-'tection, and during ſome time treated 'me with the tenderneſs of a mother. 'Within theſe few weeks I have unhappily loſt her favour, not by any 'fault of mine, I aſſure you, for I have 'always loved and reverenced her. No-'thing ſhould have obliged me to take 'this ſtep, which has no doubt an ap-'pearance of ingratitude, but the fear 'of being forced to marry a man I 'hate.'

'O heavens! my dear creature,' exclaimed the lady in an affected tone, 'what do you tell me! were you upon 'the point of being forced to a deteſted 'match?'—'Yes, Madam,' replied Miſs Courteney; 'and to this hard lot 'was I doomed by her to whom I owe 'all my paſt happineſs, and from whom 'I expected all the future.'

'You have obliged me exceſſively by 'this unreſerved confidence,' interrupted the lady; 'and you ſhall find me 'not unworthy of it. From this mo-'ment I ſwear to you an inviolable at-'tachment. Sure there is nothing ſo 'tranſporting as friendſhip and mutual 'confidence! You won my heart the 'moment I ſaw you. I have formed a 'hundred violent friendſhips, but one 'accident or other always diſſolved them 'in a ſhort time. There are very few

'persons that are capable of a violent 'friendship; at least, I never could find 'one that answered my ideas of that sort 'of engagement. Have not you been 'often disappointed? Tell me, my dear: 'I dare say you have. Your senti-'ments, I believe, are as delicate as 'mine upon this head. I am charmed, 'I am ravished with this meeting! Who 'would have imagined that by chance, 'and in a stage-coach, I should have 'found what I have so earnestly sought 'for these three months, a person with 'whom I could contract a violent friend-'ship, such as minds like ours are only 'capable of feeling?'

'I am extremely obliged to you, 'Madam, for your good opinion,' said Miss Courteney; 'I hope I shall never 'be so unfortunate as to forfeit it; in-'deed I have reason to think that, in my 'present distressed situation, a friend is 'a blessing sent from heaven.'

'Well! but my dear Clelia,' said this slighty lady, 'you have not told 'me all your story. I call you Clelia, 'because you know it is so like common 'acquaintance to address one another by 'the title of Miss Such-a-one—Roman-'tick names give a spirit to the cor-'respondence between such friends as 'you and I are: but perhaps you may 'like another name better than Clelia; 'though I think that is a mighty pretty 'one, so soft and gliding, Clelia, Cle-'lia—tell me, do you like it, my dear?'

'Call me what you please,' said Miss Courteney, smiling a little at the singu-larity of her new friend; 'but my name 'is Courteney.'

'Courteney is a very pretty surname,' said the lady; 'I hope it is not disgraced 'with any odious vulgar Christian name, 'such as Molly, or Betty, or the like.'

'I was christened Henrietta, after my 'mother,' said Miss Courteney. 'Hen-'rietta is well enough,' returned the other; 'but positively, my dear, you 'must assume the name of Clelia when 'you write to me; for we must corre-'spond every hour. Oh! what a ravish-'ing pleasure it is to indulge the over-'flowings of one's heart upon paper! 'Remember to call me Celinda in your 'letters; and in all our private conver-'sations, we shall have a thousand se-'crets to communicate to each other. 'But I am impatient to know all your 'story; it must needs be very romantick 'and pretty.'

'Alas!' said the charming Henrietta, 'this is no time to talk of my misfor-'tunes; we are entered into Hammer-'smith, and there you say you must 'leave me: give me your advice, dear 'Madam; tell me in what manner I 'must dispose of myself.'

'*Dear Madam!*' repeated the lady, 'is that the style then you resolve to use? 'have you forgot that we have contract-'ed a violent friendship, and that I am 'your Celinda, and you my Clelia?'

'I beg your pardon,' said Henrietta; 'I did not think of that name. Well, 'then, dear Celinda, what would you ad-'vise me to do? I am going to London, 'there to conceal myself from the search 'that Lady Meadows will doubtless 'make for me when she hears I have 'left her house: all my hope of a recon-'ciliation with her is through the inter-'position of a friend. I have a brother, 'who has been abroad several years, 'and whom I every day expect to hear 'is arrived; but I dare not show myself 'to any of Lady Meadows's acquain-'tance, lest I should be hurried back, 'and sacrificed to what she calls my in-'terest. I know so little of the town, 'that I am afraid I may take up my re-'sidence in an improper house, among 'people where my honour, or at least 'my reputation, may be in danger. 'Direct me, dear Madam—my dear 'Celinda, I would say—direct me what 'to do in this dreadful dilemma.' Here she paused, anxiously expecting the an-swer of her new friend, which will be found in the following chapter.

CHAP. III.

WHICH ILLUSTRATES AN OBSER-VATION OF ROCHEFOUCAULT'S, THAT IN THE MISFORTUNES OF OUR FRIENDS THERE IS ALWAYS SOMETHING THAT DOES NOT DISPLEASE US.

'I Protest, my dearest Clelia,' said the lady, 'your fears are very na-'tural upon this occasion. I should in 'your situation be almost distracted. 'Even our parents watchful cares are 'hardly sufficient to guard us against the 'attempts of insolent men: how much 'more then are those attempts to be 'dreaded, when we are left defenceless 'and exposed! Believe me, my dear, I

'sympathize

'sympathize truly with you in this mis-
'fortune. Good Heaven! I think I
'should die with apprehension were I in
'your case.'

'Don't terrify me,' said Miss Courteney, trembling. 'I have taken an imprudent step, but I must make the best of it now: Providence, I hope, will be my guard.'

'I would not terrify you, my dear,' said the lady; 'but I must repeat, that 'were I in your case, I think my fears 'would distract me. Thank Heaven! 'I am protected by watchful parents, 'cautious relations, and prudent friends; 'yet hardly thus can I think myself se-'cure from those enterprising wretches 'the men.'

This young lady had indeed a stronger protector than all these, which she did not mention, or perhaps was insensible of; and that was the extreme disagreeableness of her whole person. Her features, it is true, could not be called irregular, because few faces were ever distinguished with a set more uniformly bad. Her complexion, which was a composition of green and yellow, was marvellously well suited to her features. Nor was it possible to make any invidious comparisons between her face and her shape, since it was hard to decide which was worst.

Miss Courteney, who had burst into tears, occasioned by her reflections on her own helpless situation, compared with the advantages her friend enjoyed, and which she had so ostentatiously enumerated, was upon the point of soliciting her advice again; when the lady joyfully exclaimed—'Oh! there is my aunt's 'house, my dear Clelia, we must part 'immediately.'

'Sure,' said Henrietta, sighing, 'you 'will not leave me till you have advised 'me what to do.'

'Lord! my dear,' said the other, 'one young creature is not qualified to 'give another advice upon such oc-'casions. I wish it was in my power 'to give you proper advice; you know 'I have vowed to you an inviolable 'friendship. And——'

Here the coachman, as he had been directed, stopped before a large handsome house; and a well-dressed footman immediately appearing, came forwards to open the coach-door.

'Hear me one word,' cried Miss Courteney, perceiving this tender friend was actually going to leave her without any farther solicitude for her safety—'upon the strength of that inviolable 'friendship you have vowed to me, I 'will venture to ask a favour of you: it 'is,' pursued she, 'that you will recom-'mend me to some person of your ac-'quaintance in London, who may direct 'me to a decent house, where I can re-'main in safety till my brother's arrival.'

'I vow this is a lucky thought!' said the lady; 'I believe I can serve you, my 'dear Clelia; but you must step in with 'me to my aunt's.—John,' said she to the servant, 'is my aunt at home?' The man told her his lady was just gone to take an airing.

'That's well,' said the lady; 'we 'shall have an opportunity to settle this 'matter: but, my dear Clelia, I think 'it will be best to discharge the coach, 'the fellow possibly will not wait. I'll 'send my aunt's servant to take a 'place for you in the Hammersmith 'stage, which I know does not set out 'this half hour.'

Henrietta readily complied, overjoyed that she had really found a sincere friend in the person of this whimsical lady; who, having led her into a large well-furnished parlour, ordered some tea to be brought, and then told her, that she would give her a letter to her milliner, who was a very good sort of a woman, and where she might depend upon being absolutely safe.

'When I was last in town,' pursued she, 'which was about three weeks ago, 'her first floor was empty; and in this 'season of the year, I believe, she will 'let it to you for two guineas a week.'

'A single room will do for me,' said Miss Courteney; 'my circumstances do 'not entitle me to magnificent lodgings, 'and my business is to keep myself pri-'vate.'

'Well, well, my dear, be that as you 'please,' said the other; 'I will write 'the letter without mentioning what 'lodgings you require.' Saying this, she called for pens and paper; and having wrote the following billet, gave it to Miss Courteney for her perusal.

'DEAR MRS. EGRET,

'THE lady who will deliver you 'this, is one for whom I have the 'most violent friendship imaginable. 'You know how ardent my friendships 'are; but I think I never had any so

'firmly rooted as this, though our acquaintance commenced but a few hours ago. This dear friend having desired me to recommend her to some person to lodge with, I thought of you, knowing you can accommodate her with genteel apartments. I am, dear Mrs. Egret, your humble servant,

'E. WOODBY.'

Henrietta having read the letter, returned it again into the hands of her friend, gratefully acknowledging the favour, although she had some objections to it; for she did not approve of the words Genteel Apartments, being resolved not to exceed a very moderate price: but she rightly conceived that Miss Woodby rather listened to her own pride than her conveniency, by throwing in that circumstance, and therefore took no notice of it.

The letter being sealed and directed, Miss Courteney carefully deposited it in her pocket; and the two ladies were preparing to drink their tea, when the footman entered, and said the stage-coach was just going off: our fair traveller instantly rose up, and took leave of her friend, who having prevailed upon her to drink a glass of sack and water, since she was disappointed of her tea, parted from her with an affectionate embrace, and a promise that she would see her in town very shortly.

Miss Courteney finding only one passenger in the coach, who was a grave elderly woman, resumed her journey with some kind of chearfulness, having thus happily got over her apprehensions of falling into bad company, where chance might have directed her to lodge.

CHAP. IV.

IN WHICH OUR HEROINE, THROUGH INATTENTION, FALLS INTO THE VERY DIFFICULTY SHE HAD TAKEN SUCH PAINS TO AVOID.

BUT this cessation from uneasiness did not last long: for the mind which can fasten with violence but upon one circumstance of distress at a time, and being suddenly relieved from that, is sensible of a calm, which, compared with it's former feelings, may be called pleasure, soon selects another object to engross it's attention, and fixes on it with equal anxiety and solicitude. Thus it fared with our lovely heroine, whose other cares had all been swallowed up in reflections on the danger to which her honour was exposed. Eased of these apprehensions by the good offices of Miss Woodby, she was happy for a few moments, till the consequences of her flight rushed full upon her mind: Lady Meadows's favour irrecoverable; her fortune ruined; her reputation blasted. This last thought, which, from the delicacy of her sentiments, gave her the deepest regret, dwelt most upon her mind; and, forgetting that she was not alone, she clasped her hands together in a violent emotion, and burst into tears.

The old gentlewoman, who had been eyeing her very attentively, not a little surprised at the seriousness that appeared in the looks and behaviour of so young a creature, eagerly asked her what was the matter.

Henrietta, rouzed by this question, which (so absent had she been) first informed her she was observed, wiped her eyes, and composing her countenance, said she was often low-spirited.

'Don't tell me of low spirits,' said the old gentlewoman; 'such young bodies 'as you are not low-spirited for nothing. 'What! I warrant you, there is a sweet-'heart in the case?'

'Oh! no Madam,' said Miss Courteney, blushing, 'no sweetheart, I assure 'you.'

'No, really?' resumed she; 'well, then, 'I suppose you have lost a friend.'

'I have indeed lost a friend,' said the young lady, hoping that acknowledgment would put an end to the questions of her fellow-traveller.

'Indeed!' said the old woman; 'and 'this friend—is it a father, or mother, 'or sister, or——'

'All, all,' interrupted Miss Courteney, bursting again into tears.

'How all?' repeated the old woman, 'Have you just now lost all these kins-'folks?'

'I lost them all in losing that friend, 'Madam,' said Henrietta; vexed that her sensibility, wakened by such questions, had made her too little guarded in her expressions.

'Oh, oh, I understand you, child,' said the good gentlewoman: 'this per-'son, I don't ask you whether it was a 'man or woman, was to you both fa-'ther and mother. Well, and so I sup-'pose

'pose you have just heard of the death
'of this good friend, and are going to
'town on that occasion?'

Miss Courteney, finding that the inquisitive temper of her fellow-traveller was likely to lead her into a discovery of her situation, chose rather to be silent than violate truth, by feigning circumstances to deceive her; and, fortunately for her, she was prevented from suffering more disagreeable interrogatories, by the coach's suddenly stopping at an inn in Piccadilly, where it put up.

The old gentlewoman, however, at parting, asked her what part of the town she was going to, and offered, if it was in her way, to accompany her; but Henrietta evaded the question and the offer, by telling her, that she intended to take a chair. The coachman accordingly called one for her, which she entered immediately; and being asked by the chairman where she would please to be carried, she recollected, with great confusion, that Miss Woodby had not told her where her milliner lived.

She now sought for the letter, hoping there was a full direction upon that. But what was her grief and perplexity, when she found the superscription contained only these words—'For Mrs. Egret!' 'Good Heaven!' exclaimed the fair unfortunate, 'what shall I do now?'

The chairman repeating his question, she told him that she had forgot a direction, and asked him if he knew where Mrs. Egret, a milliner, lived. The fellow replied in the negative; but added, that he would enquire. He accordingly stepped into the nearest shop, which was a haberdasher's; and making a small blunder in the name, which the person he spoke to mistook for Eccles, he was told, that the milliner for whom he enquired lived in Charles Street.

The fellow returned, extremely pleased with his success, and relieved the young lady from her anxiety, who bid him carry her directly to Charles Street; and she soon found herself at the door of a milliner's shop, where she discharged her chairmen; and entering, asked a young woman, whom she saw at work, if her mistress was at home.

The girl desired her to walk into a parlour, where she was met by an agreeable well dressed woman, who received her with great politeness, and desired to know her commands.

'I have a letter for you,' said Henrietta, putting it into her hands, 'from
'a young lady, a customer of yours: the
'contents will acquaint you with my
'business.'

The milliner took the letter, and having read it, returned it again with a smile, saying, she was not the person to whom it was addressed.

'No! Madam,' said Miss Courteney, excessively surprized; 'is not your name
'Egret?'

'My name is Eccles, Madam,' said the milliner. 'Bless me!' cried Miss Courteney, 'the chairmen have made a
'mistake: I bid one of them enquire
'where Mrs. Egret, a milliner, lived,
'and he was directed hither. I shall
'be obliged to you,' pursued Henrietta,
'if you will let your maid call a chair.'

'To be sure, Madam,' said the milliner; 'but do you not know where
'this Mrs. Egret lives?'

'I have unfortunately forgot to get
'a direction,' returned the young lady;
'but I hope you can inform me.'

'I wish I could, Madam,' said the milliner; 'but really I know no such per-
'son as Mrs. Egret.'—'Surely I am
'the most unfortunate creature in the
'world!' cried Henrietta.

'I hope not, Madam,' said Mrs. Eccles, with a look of great complacency:
'there are more persons, besides Mrs.
'Egret, who would be glad to accom-
'modate you with lodgings. I wish
'mine were good enough for you.'

'Oh! they are good enough, no
'doubt,' replied Miss Courteney; 'but
'I was recommended to Mrs. Egret,
'and——' 'Pray, Madam, walk up,
'and look at my first floor,' said Mrs. Eccles; and, without waiting for any reply, immediately led the way.

Henrietta followed in such perplexity of mind, that she hardly knew what she did; and, while the officious milliner led her from room to room, expatiating at large upon the conveniencies, she continued silent, revolving in her thoughts the dilemma to which she was reduced.

The evening was so far advanced, that she could not think of going in quest of Mrs. Egret, of whom she could get no information here; yet she was not able to resolve upon taking lodgings in the house of a person to whom she was an absolute stranger: a misfortune which she had vainly endeavoured to avoid by the application she had made to Miss Woodby.

'I am afraid you don't like this
'apartment,

'apartment, Madam,' said Mrs. Eccles, who observed her look pensive and uneasy. 'I have no objection to it,' said Miss Courteney, 'but that it is rather 'too good. I do not propose to go to a 'high price; a bed-chamber, and the 'use of a parlour, will be sufficient for 'me.'

The milliner looked a little dissatisfied at these words, but told her she could accommodate her with a large handsome bed-chamber up two pair of stairs; but added, that she had no other parlour than that which she kept for her own use.

Miss Courteney desired to see the room, which was indeed very handsome and convenient; and the milliner perceiving she liked it, told her, that she should be welcome to the use of the dining-room till her first floor was lett.

The young lady thought this an obliging proposal; and, being pleased with the woman's countenance and behaviour, ventured to make an agreement with her; and every thing being settled upon very easy terms—'There is but one difficulty 'remaining,' said she, with an engaging smile, 'and that I know not how we 'shall get over; we are strangers to each 'other.'

'Oh, Madam,' interrupted Mrs. Eccles, 'though it is not my custom to take 'in lodgers without having a character, 'yet I can have no scruple with regard 'to a lady of your appearance. As for 'me, I have lived a great many years 'in this neighbourhood, and am not 'afraid of having my character enquired 'into.'

She spoke this with a little warmth, which made Henrietta imagine she expected the same kind of confidence she had shewn: so, making a merit of necessity, she appeared very well satisfied, and immediately took possession of her new apartment.

CHAP. V.

WHICH CONTAINS NOTHING BUT VERY COMMON OCCURRENCES.

MRS. Eccles being summoned into her shop by a customer, Miss Courteney desired her to send up pen, ink, and paper, being resolved to write to Miss Woodby that night, and acquaint her with the disappointment she had met with. The maid soon appeared with candles, and all the materials for writing; delivering, at the same time, her mistress's compliments to the young lady, and a request that she would favour her with her company to supper. Miss Courteney promised to wait on her, provided she was alone; and, sitting down, wrote the following letter to her new friend.

'YOU will, no doubt, my dear Miss 'Woodby, be both surprised and 'grieved to know that your kind intentions have been frustrated; and that, 'by forgetting to give me a direction, 'your recommendation to Mrs. Egret 'has proved useless to me. By a mistake of the chairman, who I desired to enquire where Mrs. Egret lived, I was 'brought to another milliner's; and she 'not being able to direct me where to 'find her, I am obliged to take up my 'lodging with a stranger. It was my 'apprehensions of what has befallen me, 'that induced me to trust you with my 'secret, a secret of the highest importance to me; and most generously did 'you repay my confidence by your 'ready assistance. It was my ill fortune which ordered it so, that I should 'not profit by your kindness. However, my gratitude is equally engaged; 'and, since I observe nothing disagreeable in the behaviour of the person in 'whose house I now am, I shall endeavour to make myself easy till I hear 'from you. I long to see you, to tell 'you my unhappy story, to have your 'compassion, or rather to be justified by 'your approbation of what I have been 'compelled by circumstances to do. 'Oh! my dear Miss, how unhappy is 'that mind, which, with right intentions, feels a consciousness of some'thing wrong in it's resolutions! Direct 'for me by the name of Benson, at 'Mrs. Eccles's, milliner, in Charles 'Street. Adieu. I sign the pretty 'name you gave me,

'CLELIA.'

Henrietta had just sealed her letter, when somebody tapped at her door; she opened it immediately, and seeing Mrs. Eccles, asked her pardon for not waiting on her before. Mrs. Eccles told her, that her little supper being ready, she came to see if she was at leisure.

Miss Courteney found the cloth spread in the parlour, and an elegant supper was served

ſerved up. Mrs Eccles did not fail to apologize frequently for the meanneſs of her entertainment, and was gratified with as many aſſurances from her fair gueſt, that no apology was neceſſary. During the repaſt, Mrs. Eccles entertained her with an account of the neweſt faſhions, the moſt celebrated performers of the opera and playhouſes, little pieces of ſcandal, and the like topicks of converſation, which Henrietta had often heard diſcuſſed among her more polite acquaintance; and, indeed, almoſt the only ones that engage the attention during the receſs of the card-table.

The milliner then turning the diſcourſe to the accident that procured her ſo agreeable a lodger, artfully purſued her hints, till the young lady found herſelf obliged to ſatisfy, in ſome degree, her curioſity concerning her ſituation.

Though ſhe was naturally communicative, even to a fault, yet ſhe did not think proper to diſcloſe herſelf farther, than to tell her, that ſhe had been obliged to come to London upon ſome affairs of conſequence, which could not be ſettled till the arrival of her brother, who was every day expected from his travels.

This account was ſo near the truth, that Miſs Courteney, in the ſimplicity of her own heart, thought it could not fail of being believed. However, the milliner, who knew the world very well, conceived there was ſomething extraordinary in the caſe—nothing leſs than a love-intrigue: nor did this ſuſpicion give her any uneaſineſs. She was one of thoſe convenient perſons with whom a lady, upon paying a certain ſum of money, might lie-in privately, and be properly attended. She made no ſcruple of accommodating with lodgings a young wife, whoſe huſband, for certain family reaſons, viſits her only now and then; and as ſhe generally found her account in ſuch ſort of lodgers, ſhe ſeldom deſired, and indeed was ſeldom incumbered, with any other.

The youth, beauty, and elegance of Miſs Courteney, the introductory letter ſo oddly conceived, her apparent perplexity and concern upon her diſappointment of the lodgings ſhe had expected, raiſed ſuſpicions, which the ſtory ſhe now heard confirmed; and not doubting but this affair would prove beneficial to her, ſhe exerted her utmoſt endeavours to pleaſe her fair lodger, and engage her to an entire confidence.

When the clock ſtruck eleven, Henrietta roſe up, in order to retire to her own chamber, to which Mrs. Eccles officiouſly attended her. Having taken leave of her at the door, ſhe bolted it on the inſide; and, after recommending herſelf to the protection of Heaven, went to bed, but not to reſt. A thouſand diſquietudes kept her waking till the morning, when ſhe ſunk into a ſlumber that laſted till eleven o'clock.

As ſoon as ſhe opened her eyes, ſhe was informed, by the ſtrong light in her chamber, that the morning was far advanced; and finding by her watch, which lay on a chair near her bed-ſide, how much ſhe had exceeded her uſual time, (for ſhe was a very early riſer) ſhe hurried on her cloaths, and went down ſtairs, being extremely anxious to get her letter ſent to Miſs Woodby: ſhe went directly into the ſhop, ſuppoſing ſhe ſhould find Mrs. Eccles there; but was exceſſively ſurpriſed to hear from the apprentice, that her miſtreſs was not yet up.

'I ſuppoſe,' ſaid Miſs Courteney, 'ſhe reſted no better than myſelf laſt 'night, which was the cauſe of my ly-'ing ſo late this morning.'

'La! Ma'am,' replied the girl, 'my 'miſtreſs is never up before eleven or 'twelve.'—'Indeed!' ſaid the young lady, diſſembling her concern at a circumſtance which gave her no favourable opinion of her landlady. 'But, 'Madam,' added the girl, 'you may 'have your breakfaſt whenever you 'pleaſe to order it.' She then called the maid, whom Miſs Courteney ordered to fetch a porter; being determined to have her letter delivered into Miſs Woodby's own hands, if poſſible. A porter was ſoon found, who undertook to carry the letter to Hammerſmith, as directed; and this affair being diſpatched, Henrietta ordered ſome chocolate for her breakfaſt, and retired to her own chamber.

CHAP. VI.

IN WHICH MISS WOODBY AGAIN MAKES HER APPEARANCE.

IN about a quarter of an hour, Mrs. Eccles appeared in a long looſe linen ſack, being her morning dreſs, and inſiſted upon Miſs Courteney's breakfaſting with her; who at length conſented, having agreed to pay at the rate of a guinea

guinea a week for her board, during the time she stayed, which she inly determined should not be long.

After the tea-things were removed, she went into the shop to make a purchase of some ribbands and gloves; and while she was amusing herself with looking over a great variety of fashionable trifles, which the apprentice officiously shewed her, a young gentleman, who had been attracted by her appearance, came into the shop, and asked to look at some Dresden ruffles. Henrietta, blushing at the earnestness with which he gazed on her, retired immediately, telling Mrs. Eccles, as she passed through the parlour, that there was a gentleman in the shop. The milliner, upon this information, lifted up her hands mechanically to her head to adjust her hair, and hastened to attend her customer; while her fair lodger, taking a book that lay in the window, went to her apartment, with an intention to amuse herself with reading till the longed-for return of her messenger.

The book, however, which was a volume of the New Atalantis, did not suit her taste; she threw it away, and abandoned herself to her own melancholy reflections, which were at length interrupted by her landlady, who entered the room with a smiling air, telling her, she had had a very good customer.

'I am glad of it,' said Henrietta.

'Truly,' said Mrs. Eccles, 'I believe I am obliged to your fair face 'for my good luck this morning.'—'How!' returned the young lady, with a countenance graver than before.

'Nay, never wonder at it,' said Mrs. Eccles; 'the gentleman laid out twelve 'guineas with me; but I don't believe 'he wanted the things he bought. You 'were the loadstone,' added she smartly, 'that drew him into the shop. He asked 'me a hundred questions about you.'

'I am sorry for it,' said Miss Courteney; 'I wish I had not been in the shop.' —'And why sorry, pray?' resumed Mrs. Eccles; 'I warrant you are sorry 'you are handsome too. However, I 'have another thing to tell you, to increase your sorrow, and that is, that 'you have certainly made a conquest of 'this fine spark; and, to overwhelm you 'with affliction,' pursued she, laughing, 'I verily believe he is a man of quality.'

'Do you know him, then?' said Miss Courteney, who could not help smiling a little at her vivacity.

'I only judge by his appearance and 'manners,' replied Mrs. Eccles, 'that 'he is a man of rank; but I dare say, 'we shall hear more from him.'—'Sure, Mrs. Eccles!' interrupted Miss Courteney, with some emotion.

'Nay, nay, child,' exclaimed Mrs. Eccles, 'don't put yourself into a flurry; 'I don't know that I shall ever see him 'again.—But, pray, what book have 'you got here?'—'One I found in your 'parlour,' said Miss Courteney. 'Oh, 'I see what it is,' cried Mrs. Eccles, opening it; 'it is a charming pretty 'book. If you love reading, Miss, I can 'furnish you with books; I have a very 'pretty collection.'—'I should be glad 'to see your collection,' said the young lady, who was apprehensive of her renewing a conversation that had been very disagreeable to her.

Mrs. Eccles immediately led her into a little room on the same floor, and opening a closet, in which there were about two dozen books ranged on a shelf, she bid her take her choice, for there was variety enough.

Henrietta soon examined the so much boasted collection, which she found chiefly consisted of novels and plays. 'Well,' said Mrs. Eccles, 'how do you like my 'books? are they not prettily chosen?'

'I assure you,' replied she, taking down one, 'you chose very well when 'you chose this; for it is one of the most 'exquisite pieces of humour in our language.'—'I knew you would approve 'of my taste,' said Mrs. Eccles, 'but 'what have you got? O! the Adventures of Joseph Andrews. Yes; that 'is a very pretty book, to be sure!—but 'there is Mrs. Haywood's Novels, did 'you ever read them? Oh! they are 'the finest love-sick, passionate stories; 'I assure you, you'll like them vastly: 'pray, take a volume of Haywood upon 'my recommendation.'—'Excuse me,' said Henrietta, 'I am very well satisfied 'with what I have; I have read this 'book three times already, and yet I 'assure you, I shall begin it again with 'as much eagerness and delight as I 'did at first.'

'Well, as you please,' said Mrs. Eccles, leaving her at the door of her own chamber; 'I won't disturb you till 'dinner is ready.'

Miss

Miſs Courteney ſat down to her book, which agreeably engaged her attention, till ſhe was interrupted with the pleaſing news of her porter's being returned: ſhe flew down ſtairs; he delivered her a letter, the ſeal of which ſhe eagerly broke, and found it as follows.

CELINDA TO HER DEAREST CLELIA.

'NO words can deſcribe the exceſs of my grief at the news of your diſappointment: but, my dear, how was it poſſible for your chairmen to miſtake the houſe ſo egregiouſly? Not know where Mrs. Egret lived!—Fooliſh fellows! ſhe is one of the greateſt milliners in town, and employed by perſons of the firſt rank. But don't be uneaſy, I ſhall ſee you this afternoon: your meſſenger found me preparing to ſet out for town with my aunt. Adieu, my Clelia; and believe me, with the moſt unparalleled affection, ever your's,

'CELINDA.'

The hopes of ſeeing her friend, and being ſettled in more agreeable lodgings, gave Henrietta ſuch a flow of ſpirits, that when ſhe was ſummoned to dinner by her landlady, ſhe appeared leſs reſerved than uſual, and even kept up the converſation with ſome kind of chearfulneſs. Mrs. Eccles, finding her in ſo good a humour, introduced the ſubject which ran moſt in her head. The fine young gentleman, who had been her cuſtomer in the morning, was praiſed in raptures of admiration—ſo genteel, ſo well bred, ſuch ſparkling eyes, ſuch an air of diſtinction—every now and then exclaiming, 'Well, you have certainly made a conqueſt of him—we ſhall ſee him again, never fear—he'll find his way here again, I warrant him.'

Miſs Courteney, to put an end to this diſcourſe, told her landlady, that ſhe expected a lady to drink tea with her that afternoon. Mrs. Eccles immediately gave orders for the dining-room to be put in order, and thither Miſs Courteney retired in expectation of her viſiter. At ſix o'clock a footman's rap at the door announced the arrival of Miſs Woodby; Henrietta ran to the head of the ſtairs to receive her.

'O Heavens! my dear creature,' cried Miſs Woodby, 'what trouble have I been in upon your account!—but even the diſquiets of friendſhip are pleaſing; I would not be inſenſible of that charming paſſion, nor without an object of it, for the world.'

Miſs Courteney thanked her in very obliging terms, while her ſentimental friend adjuſted her dreſs in the glaſs, and then throwing herſelf into a chair, declared that ſhe was all impatience to hear her hiſtory.

'Permit me,' ſaid Miſs Courteney, 'to inform you firſt, that I am not eaſy here; I do not greatly like my landlady, and I wiſh I could remove this very night.' Miſs Woodby told her it was impoſſible, becauſe ſhe had not yet ſeen Mrs. Egret, but that ſhe would go to her in the morning, and prepare her for her coming. Henrietta, being now at eaſe, complied with her friend's requeſt, and began her little hiſtory in this manner.

CHAP. VII.

IN WHICH HENRIETTA RELATES THE STORY OF HER PARENTS, INTRODUCTORY TO HER OWN.

'IT is no wonder, my dear Miſs Woodby, that at theſe early years I am precipitated into diſtreſſes and dangers; my very birth was a misfortune to my parents, and entailed upon them thoſe miſeries which began by their unhappy paſſion.

'My father was the youngeſt of three brothers, but ſo great a favourite of his father the Earl of ——, that it was thought he would make his fortune very conſiderable, having a very large eſtate, and a very lucrative employment, out of which he every year laid by large ſums to provide for his younger ſons, of whom my father, as I have already ſaid, was the beſt beloved.

'It happened one day, that the widow of an officer in the army came to ſolicit the earl's intereſt towards getting her a penſion. She was accompanied by her daughter, a young woman about ſixteen years of age, and who muſt at that time have been exquiſitely handſome, ſince, after a long ſeries of troubles, and in an age more advanced, ſhe appeared to me one of the moſt beautiful women in the world.

'The widow, by a certain method of perſuaſion, which operates powerfully on the domeſticks of men in place, got her petition ſent up to the

'earl. It imported that her husband, 'after having served near fifty years in 'the army, had obtained leave to sell his 'commission for the benefit of his wife 'and child; that the money arising from 'it had been deposited in the hands of 'an agent who had broke a few months 'afterwards, by which unhappy acci-'dent all the money was lost, and this 'loss had so greatly affected the old 'gentleman, that he died a few weeks 'afterwards, leaving his wife and child 'wholly unprovided for, and made 'wretched by those, very means that 'were calculated to secure them a gen-'teel subsistence; since by the sale of her 'husband's commission, the widow was 'no longer intitled to a pension, which 'however she hoped to obtain, in con-'sideration of his long services, and the 'peculiar circumstances of her misfor-'tune.

'The widow, who knew it was in 'this nobleman's power to put her im-'mediately upon the list of pensions, 'conceived great hopes of the success of 'her application, when, after waiting 'two hours in the hall, she was order-'ed to attend his lordship in his li-'brary.

'The nobleman received her with 'civility enough; but his first words de-'stroyed those expectations with which 'she had flattered herself.

"I am sorry it is not in my power "to do you any service," said he; "your husband sold out, therefore you "have no right to the pension. I pity "your misfortune; but in this case there "is nothing to be done."

'The widow was a woman of sense 'and breeding: she was sensible that the 'earl paid no regard to her plea, other-'wise he would not have urged that as an 'argument against granting her petition, 'without which no petition would have 'been necessary: intreaties she found 'would be fruitless, therefore she would 'not descend to the meanness of a sup-'pliant, but curtsied in silent anguish, 'and withdrew.

'The earl's youngest son, who was 'present at this scene, and who had be-'held the decent sorrow of the mother 'with reverence, the innocent beauty of 'the daughter with tender admiration, 'impelled by an emotion which yet he 'knew not the cause of, hastily follow-'ed them, and offered his hand to the 'widow to lead her down stairs.

'She, who from a natural dignity of 'sentiment, had been enabled to endure 'the supercilious behaviour of the fa-'ther without betraying any signs of 'discomposure, burst into tears at this 'instance of unexpected attention and 'respect in the son.

'Mr. Courteney, as he led her down 'stairs: had his eyes incessantly turned 'towards the young lady, who follow-'ed blushing, to see herself so earnestly 'beheld. He found they had not a 'coach waiting for them; he ordered a 'servant to call one; and in the mean 'time desired they would walk into a 'parlour, where he took occasion to ex-'press his concern to the widow for the 'disappointment she had met with; but 'assured her, that he would employ his 'good offices in her favour; and from 'the influence he had over his father, 'he said he hoped he should succeed. 'He then desired to know where he might 'wait upon her, in case he had any good 'news to bring her.

'The widow, charmed with his po-'liteness, astonished at his kindness, and 'full of hope and pleasing expectation, 'gave him a direction in writing, which 'she had brought with her.

'Mr. Courteney received it, bowing 'low, as if she had conferred a favour 'on him; a favour it was indeed, for, 'by this time, he was lost in love for the 'charming daughter, whose looks dis-'covered such soft sensibility of her situ-'ation; such conscious dignity, which 'misfortune could not impair; such 'calm resignation, as if, superior to her 'woes, that her beauty seemed her least 'perfection; and he was more captivated 'by the graces of her mind that shone 'out in her person, than with her lovely 'person itself.

'The coach was now come; he sighed 'when he took leave of them, rivetting 'his eyes on the young charmer, who 'modestly looked down, unable to bear 'his ardent glances. Again he assured 'the widow of his services; and, sud-'denly recollecting himself, he put a 'purse into her hand, begging her to 'accept that trifle as an earnest of his 'friendship.

'The lady was so much surprised at 'his behaviour, that she was at a loss in 'what manner to answer him; and, be-'fore she could form any, she found her-'self in the coach, to which he had ac-'companied her with great respect.

'When

'When the coach drove from the door, 'she examined the contents of the purse, 'and found five and twenty guineas in 'it: a present which, if it had been less, 'would have mortified her pride, and 'being so considerable, alarmed her pru- 'dence. She recollected every circum- 'stance of the young gentleman's beha- 'viour, and all contributed to persuade 'her, that he was actuated by some motive 'more forcible than mere compassion.

'She remembered that she had caught 'him gazing earnestly at her daughter; 'she reproached herself for taking her 'with her, for accepting the money, for 'giving a direction. She dreaded the 'consequence of having exposed her 'child to the attempts of a young man 'formed to please, and by his rank and 'fortune enabled to pursue every method 'that could gratify his passions. She 'began now to be solicitous about the 'effect such uncommon generosity had 'on the mind of her daughter. She 'asked her what she thought of the gen- 'tleman, who so kindly interested him- 'self in their affairs, notwithstanding the 'cruel denial his father had given?

'Miss, whose gratitude had with dif- 'ficulty been restrained from rising from 'her heart to her tongue, eagerly seized 'this opportunity to praise their bene- 'factor. Her expressions were so lively, 'she showed so tender a sensibility of his 'kindness, such a blushing approbation 'of his person and manners, that the 'good widow thought proper to check 'her vivacity by a little reproof, and 'attributed all the respect he had shown 'them to his natural politeness, and his 'offers of service; and the present he had 'forced on her, to a sudden sally of 'compassion which young unexperienced 'persons are liable to. However, her 'apprehensions were now increased; and 'when Mr. Courteney came to see her, 'in consequence of his promise, which 'was two days afterwards, she had al- 'ready taken her resolution.

'She took care that her daughter 'should not be in the way when he sent 'up his name; and, notwithstanding 'the politeness with which he accosted 'her, she observed that he was disap- 'pointed, and that his eyes involuntarily 'sought out an object which he more 'wished to see than her.

'I don't know whether these little 'particulars may not seem tedious to 'you, my dear Miss Woodby; but I 'have often heard my mother repeat 'them with delight, declaring that these 'first tokens of my father's affection for 'her made so deep an impression on her 'heart, fluctuating, as it then was, be- 'tween hope and fear, that she ever re- 'tained the most lively remembrance of 'them, and could never relate them 'without feeling in some degree the tan e 'pleasing emotions with which she was 'at that time agitated.

'Mr. Courteney began the conver- 'sation with assuring the widow, that 'he had been mindful of her affairs; that 'his solicitations had not yet indeed had 'the desired effect, but that he hoped 'shortly to bring her better news. The 'widow thanked him with great polite- 'ness for his kind interposition in her 'favour, which she declared would al- 'ways have a claim to her sincerest gra- 'titude, whether he succeeded or not in 'his applications. She then drew the 'purse out of her pocket, and putting 'it respectfully into his hands, told him, 'that not being in any immediate ne- 'cessity, she begged he would not take 'it ill if she declined accepting a present 'which would lay her under an unre- 'turnable obligation.

'Mr. Courteney blushed with sur- 'prize and disappointment; but the dig- 'nity with which she looked and spoke, 'making it impossible for him to press 'her any farther, he received the money 'back again with a low bow, apolo- 'gizing at the same time for the liberty 'he had taken.

'The widow, seeing him disconcerted, 'politely recommended her interests to 'him; and Mr. Courteney, charmed 'that she would allow him to be her 'friend on any terms, retired with a pro- 'mise that he would take as much care 'of them as of his own.

'This interview,' continued Hen- rietta, 'confirmed the widow in her sus- 'picions, that her daughter was not in- 'different to their new benefactor: he 'had observed her scrupulous reserve 'with regard to the young beauty, and 'hoped to remove it by affecting a total 'neglect of her; so that he did not even 'enquire how she did. Whatever is 'done with design is always overdone: 'the widow was persuaded that a man 'of Mr. Courteney's good breeding 'would not have passed over one of the 'common forms of politeness, but to 'answer some secret purpose. Her vigi- 'lance increased in proportion to her 'fears; and although he made her several

'visits, under pretence of enquiring more 'minutely into the circumstances of her 'case, yet he never was so fortunate as 'to find her daughter with her.

'This conduct, while it stimulated 'his passion, gave him a high opinion of 'the virtue and prudence of her, who, 'in such unhappy circumstances, showed 'such extreme attention to the honour 'and reputation of her child. Hitherto 'he had not been at the trouble to ex-'amine his own views and designs upon 'this young beauty. Hurried away 'by the violence of his passion, he had 'assiduously sought opportunities of see-'ing and conversing with her; but the 'difficulties he met with made him look 'into his own heart, that he might know 'if he was still sufficient master of it to 'give over a pursuit which was likely to 'prove fruitless.

'Amazed to find that what he took 'for a transient inclination, was a passion 'immoveably fixed; that he had formed 'resolutions, when he believed he had 'only entertained desires; that the whole 'happiness and misery of his life was 'in the power of a young woman, de-'stitute of friends, fortune, hopes, and 'expectations, and rich only in beauty 'and virtue—for virtuous he was sure 'she must be, under the care of so wise 'and prudent a mother—he was alarm-'ed at his own condition; dreaded the 'consequences of a passion so placed as 'that it could never procure the sanction 'of his father's consent, and resolved to 'expose himself no more to the danger 'of seeing her.

'However, he did not fail to solicit 'his father very earnestly in behalf of 'the unfortunate widow. The earl, 'who had taken notice of his officious 'respect the day she was introduced to 'him, and attributed it rather to the 'beauty of the daughter than any sen-'timent of compassion, began to be un-'easy at his so frequently pressing him 'on that subject, and forbade him to 'mention it any more.

'Mr. Courteney was obliged to be 'silent, lest he should confirm those sus-'picions which he saw his father had 'conceived; and finding his mind in a 'very uneasy state, he hoped that, by 'removing himself to a greater distance 'from the object he loved, he should re-'move the thoughts of her likewise: he 'obtained his father's consent to his re-'tiring for a few weeks to their seat 'in the country, under pretence of a 'slight indisposition; but he could not 'resolve to go without endeavouring 'once more to force a present upon the 'widow, which might prevent her be-'ing exposed to any distress during his 'absence.

'He therefore wrote to her, and ac-'quainting her with the ill success of 'his mediation with his father, expressed 'the highest concern for it, and assured 'her that nothing could alleviate it but 'her acceptance of the bank note which 'he inclosed, and which was for fifty 'pounds: he told her, he was going into 'the country, that she might not suppose 'he had any design of inducing her by 'such a present to admit his visits; and 'concluded with assuring her, that she 'might at all times command his ser-'vices, and rely on his friendship.

'He did not send away this letter till 'he was ready to take horse; and being 'now more composed, from the belief 'that he had silenced the scruples of this 'good woman, and secured her and her 'lovely daughter from any immediate 'necessity, he pursued his journey, full 'of pleasing reflections on the disinte-'restedness of his love.'

CHAP. VIII.

IN WHICH HENRIETTA CONTINUES HER HISTORY.

'ABSENCE,' says a certain wri-'ter, 'increases violent passions, 'and cures moderate ones; just as the 'wind extinguishes a small flame, while 'it makes a great one burn more fierce-'ly. Mr. Courteney's passion was of 'this kind; he had loved with violence 'from the moment he began to love. In 'vain he had recourse to books, to com-'pany, to field sports, and rural amuse-'ments; it was not possible for him to 'call off his thoughts a moment from 'that object from whom he fled with 'such care. Two months he wore away 'in a constant perturbation of mind, 'still flattering himself that he was nearer 'his cure, while his disease gathered 'strength every day.

'It happened that one evening he 'fell into company with some officers, 'whose regiment was quartered in that 'part of the country; and one of them 'mentioned Colonel Carlton, and the

'unhappy

'unhappy situation his widow and 'daughter were left in.

'Mr. Courteney, roused to attention 'by that name so dear to him pretended 'to be wholly ignorant of those ladies 'case, that he might indulge himself in 'the pleasure of talking of her he loved.

'The officer gave him a circumstan-'tial detail of what he knew as well as 'himself; concluding with many com-'mendations of Mrs. Carlton's good 'sense, prudence, and virtue; and such 'rapturous praises of the young lady's 'beauty and uncommon qualifications 'at such early years, that Mr. Courte-'ney, for the first time sensible of the 'tortures of jealousy, could with diffi-'culty conceal his emotions.

"You speak so feelingly," said a gen-'tleman in company, "of this young "lady's perfections, that I fancy you "are in love with her. Come, here is "her health; is it to be a match?"

"I should be but too happy in such "a wife," replied the officer; "but "she deserves a better husband: it is not "for a poor lieutenant," added he, 'smiling, "to marry for love; but if I "was a man of fortune, I would prefer "Miss Carlton to all the women I have "ever seen."

'Mr. Courteney afterwards declared, 'that he suffered inconceivable anguish 'during this conversation. He quitted 'the company with some precipitation; 'and when he was at liberty to reflect, 'he reproached himself a thousand times 'for his folly in leaving such a treasure 'for another to obtain. Every man he 'thought would look upon Miss Carl-'ton with the same eyes as that young 'officer; and among them might not 'one be found blest with a fortune to 'make her happy, and above all narrow 'considerations which could hinder him 'from making himself so?

'Resolutions are easily formed when 'the heart suggests them. Mr. Courte-'ney, who had so long fluctuated be-'tween his passion and his prudence, 'was, by the fear of losing what he 'loved, determined in an instant to put 'it past the possibility of losing her. 'His father's anger, which at first ap-'peared so formidable to him, was now 'considered as a trifle, that would be 'easily got over: he was not going to 'introduce any stale mistress into a noble 'family, nor to give a comedian or singer 'for a sister to his sisters, and a daughter 'to his mother; alliances so much in 'fashion with the present race of nobility 'and people of distinction: in Miss Carl-'ton he should marry birth, beauty, vir-'tue, every perfection but riches; but 'unhappily that, in the estimation of his 'father, was worth them all.

'His fortune indeed was undeter-'mined; it might be great, it might be 'very inconsiderable, since it depended 'upon the will of his father. His father 'would never consent to his marriage 'with Miss Carlton; but though dis-'obliged, yet, loving him as he did, was 'it likely that he would always continue 'inexorable? Besides, he had a certain, 'though a remote prospect, of a large 'estate, to which he was to succeed at 'the death of a relation, who was old, 'and had been married twenty years, 'without having ever had a child.

'Should he find it impossible to re-'concile his father to his marriage, yet 'he was secure at least of a genteel pro-'vision; but with such excellencies as 'Miss Carlton was possessed of, how 'could it be imagined that she should 'not in time conciliate his father's af-'fections, and make him approve of his 'choice?

'There is no logick, my dear Miss 'Woodby, like the logick of the heart. 'Mr. Courteney, as is usual on such 'occasions, having taken his resolution 'before he reasoned upon the matter, 'reasoned afterwards in such a manner 'as to be soon persuaded his resolution 'was right.

'Early the next morning he ordered 'his horses to be made ready, and he 'returned to London with all imagin-'able expedition. He alighted at the 'house of a friend, where he dismissed 'his servants and horses, and then taking 'a hackney coach, was driven to the 'street in which Mrs. Carlton lived. 'Upon stopping at the house, and en-'quiring for Mrs. Carlton, he was told 'that she had left it five weeks before, 'and being greatly indisposed, had taken 'lodgings at Chelsea for the air.

'Mr. Courteney, who now thought 'every moment an age till he saw Miss 'Carlton, and had acquainted her with 'his passion and his honourable inten-'tions, procured as full a direction as 'could be given him; but notwith-'standing his impatience to be with his 'mistress,

'mistress, he obeyed the dictates of his 'duty, in first going home to pay his 'respects to his father.

'The earl received him a little coldly; 'an expression of displeasure was on his 'countenance, which however wore off 'by degrees, as he enquired concerning 'his health, his studies and amusements, 'during his absence. At length seem-'ing to recollect something, he went to 'his cabinet, took out a letter, the seal 'of which had been broke, and delivered 'it into his son's hand, assuming an 'angry countenance as before.

'Mr. Courteney, not able to imagine 'what all this meant, opened the letter 'hastily, and found it was from Mrs. 'Carlton, dated the very day of his de-'parture, and in it was inclosed the 'bank note he had sent. The purport of 'her letter was to refuse in a genteel 'but steady manner all pecuniary as-'sistance from him; however, she thank-'ed him for his civilities, and acknow-'ledged herself greatly obliged to him.

'When Mr. Courteney had read this 'letter, which he did with much con-'fusion, the earl asked him sternly, 'what was his design by engaging in 'such a commerce? "You are in love "with the daughter," added he, "no "doubt; but if you corrupt her, you "are not an honest man; if you marry "her, you are no longer my son."

'He left him as he pronounced these 'words; and Mr. Courteney, who, 'while he beheld it at a distance, thought 'his father's displeasure might be sus-'tained, was overwhelmed with the first 'effects of it, and relapsed into all his 'former doubts, anxiety, and irreso-'lution.

'He retired to his own chamber, to 'consider on what he ought to do; but, 'unable to bear the cruel war which such 'contrary interests, such opposite wishes, 'such perplexed designs, raised in his 'mind, he hurried out of the house to 'lose reflection in a variety of objects, 'and took his way to the Park.

'He walked down the Mall: it was 'crouded with company which did not 'in the least engage his attention; he 'continued his walk, and finding him-'self at Buckingham Gate, his steps me-'chanically pursued the road that led to 'Chelsea.

'As soon as he saw himself near the 'place where his mistress resided, all 'other thoughts were absorbed in the 'transporting reflection, that he should 'see her within a few moments; his 'father's threats were forgot, the loss 'of his favour filled him with no uneasy 'apprehensions. To how many revo-'lutions is the human mind subject, 'when passion has assumed the reins of 'government, which reason ought to 'hold! Mr. Courteney had almost im-'perceptibly to himself resumed his first 'design of offering his hand to Miss 'Carlton.

'With very little difficulty he found 'out the house where her mother and 'she lodged; the door was opened to him 'by a girl, who, upon his enquiring if 'Mrs. Carlton was at home, told him 'she was sick in bed, and, showing him 'into a little parlour, ran up stairs to ac-'quaint Miss, as he supposed, that a 'gentleman was there.

'In a few minutes a venerable old 'woman appeared, who had so fixed a 'concern upon her countenance, that 'Mr. Courteney, shifting his thoughts 'from the illness of the mother to the 'apprehension of some possible misfor-'tune to the daughter, (for love, if it 'hopes all, fears all likewise) asked her 'with great emotion if any thing extra-'ordinary had happened to the ladies.

'The good woman, pleased with his 'solicitude, which she thought promised 'some relief, told him plainly, that Mrs. 'Carlton was in the utmost distress; 'that she had been ill several weeks; 'that she had not been able to procure 'proper advice; "And," added she, 'bursting into tears, "she has even "wanted common necessaries."

"O my God!" exclaimed Mr. Courte-'ney, with a deep sigh; "but Miss— "what is become of Miss?"—"Alas! "Sir," replied the old woman, "the "dear child is almost dead with fatigue "and grief; she has watched by her "mother these ten nights successively, "there is no persuading her to quit her "for a moment. I left her in an agony "of sorrow, for it is believed poor Mrs. "Carlton cannot live three days."

"Conduct me to her," cried Mr. 'Courteney eagerly; "I may possibly "be able to comfort her; let me see her, "I conjure you, immediately."

"Stay a moment, Sir," said the old 'woman, stopping him, for he was 'making towards the door; "I will go "up first and inform the ladies."— "There is no occasion for that," said

'Mr.

'Mr. Courteney; "Mrs. Carlton "knows me very well; she will not, I "am sure, be sorry to see me; I have "something to say to her."

'The good woman, seeing his obsti-'nacy, permitted him to follow her up 'stairs: she gently opened the chamber-'door, and, approaching the bed where 'the sick lady lay, told her there was a 'friend of her's who desired to see her. 'Mr. Courteney entered that moment, 'and beheld a sight which called for 'more fortitude than he was at that 'time possessed of to support without 'tears.

'Mrs. Carlton lay extended on her 'bed, supported by a heighth of cushions 'to facilitate her breathing, which she 'seemed to do with great difficulty. 'Death appeared in her languid coun-'tenance; and an expression of the ten-'der anguish of a mother for the child 'whom she was so soon to leave exposed 'to the insults of a barbarous world, 'mixed with the pious resignation of a 'Christian, was impressed on every line 'of it.

'Miss Carlton was kneeling at the 'bed-side, and held one of her mother's 'hands, which she was bending over in 'an agony of grief. Upon hearing what 'the old woman said, she raised her 'head; and, directing her streaming 'eyes to the place where Mr. Courteney 'stood, showed him a face pale, ema-'ciated, but lovely still. At sight of him 'a faint blush overspread her cheeks, and 'hastily turning to her mother—"It "is Mr. Courteney, my dear mamma," 'said she.

"Oh! Sir," said Mrs. Carlton, per-'ceiving him, "you are very good to "seek out affliction thus. I shall shortly "be past all my cares; but what will be-"come of this poor helpless orphan?" 'The tears that streamed from her eyes 'prevented her farther utterance.

'Mr. Courteney threw himself on his 'knees at the bed-side, and almost sob-'bing with the violence of his emotions 'at this affecting language—"Oh! "Madam," said he, "what must you "not have suffered? why would you not "accept what little assistance it was in "my power to offer you? I know your "delicate scruples. I come to beg you "will give yourself a right to all my "future services. I have something to "communicate to you. But," added 'he, looking at the old woman who had 'introduced him, "we are not alone."

"Speak freely, Sir," said Mrs. Carl-'ton; "this good woman is my daugh-"ter's nurse; she knows all my affairs; "I am much indebted to her kindness "and affection for my child."

"What I have to say," proceeded 'Mr. Courteney, "relates to that "dear, that lovely daughter: I loved her "from the first moment I saw her; such "innocence, such beauty, could not sug-"gest any impure desire. As soon as "I knew the force of my passion, which "absence first made me know, I fixed "it's purpose. Permit me to offer her "my hand; I cannot be happy without "her."

"What do you say, Sir?" said Mrs. 'Carlton, excessively surprised: "would "you marry my daughter?" Then, af-'ter a little pause, "No," pursued she, "this can never be, your father will not "consent to it."

"I own freely to you, Madam," 'said Mr. Courteney, "that I have no "hopes of gaining my father's consent; "but when the affair is irretrievable, he "will be softened, I am sure he will. "Let not this scruple hinder you from "giving your daughter a protector."— "Surely," said Mrs. Carlton, lifting 'up her eyes, "the hand of Providence "is here; and it would be impious to "oppose it's will. You have my con-"sent, Sir," said she to Mr. Courteney; "would it pleased God that you had "his also, whom it is your duty to con-"sult on this occasion, and to obey if "you can."

'Mr. Courteney assured her he would 'solicit his father's consent; but that 'he could not be happy without Miss 'Carlton, and was already determined.

'That young lady had retired into 'another room at the beginning of this 'discourse, in perturbations which may 'be better imagined than described. 'Mr. Courteney, by her mother's per-'mission, attended her: he approached 'her with a timidity which, the inequa-'lity of their circumstances considered, 'may seem surprising; but those who 'know the nature of a sincere and vio-'lent passion, will easily account for it— "for fear," says an elegant writer, "always accompanies love when it is "great, as flames burn highest when "they tremble most." He took her

'hand,

'hand, and kiſſing it reſpectfully, told 'her that Mrs. Carlton had begun his 'felicity, by permitting him to offer 'himſelf to her acceptance as a huſband, 'but that ſhe only could compleat it by 'her conſent.

'Miſs Carlton bluſhed, turned pale, 'and bluſhed again: at length ſhe 'replied, that ſhe had no other will 'than her mother's. "But this offer," 'added ſhe, in an accent that expreſſed 'at once her ſurprize and gratitude, "is "ſo generous, ſo unexpected, ſo un-"hoped for——" The laſt words 'ſeemed to eſcape her; ſhe bluſhed more 'than before. Mr. Courteney took in 'all their tender meaning: he kiſſed her 'hand again in a rapture of joy, and 'was beginning to make her ſome paſ-'ſionate declarations, when they heard 'the nurſe crying out for help.

'Surprize and joy at what had ſo 'lately happened, operated ſo powerfully 'on Mrs. Carlton's almoſt exhauſted 'ſpirits, that ſhe had fallen into a faint-'ing fit. Miſs Carlton eagerly flew to 'her aſſiſtance, Mr. Courteney followed 'her with an anxious concern. As ſoon 'as ſhe recovered, he told her he would 'inſtantly return to London, and diſ-'patch a phyſician to attend her, and 'would be with her again the next even-'ing.

'He took a tender farewel of his miſ-'treſs; and calling the nurſe aſide, gave 'her twenty guineas, to provide what-'ever was wanting, and haſtened back 'to London.

CHAP. IX.

THE STORY CONTINUED.

'MR. Courteney's firſt care was to 'ſend a phyſician to the ſick 'lady; and, that performed, he deli-'berated in what manner he ſhould 'acquaint his father with his intention. 'He knew him too well to hope for his 'conſent to his marriage with Miſs 'Carlton; and he had not courage 'enough to ſtand the reproaches of a 'parent, whom he was predetermined 'to diſobey. He choſe therefore to write 'to him, ſuppoſing he ſhould, when 'unawed by his preſence, be able to 'find arguments ſtrong enough to make 'ſome impreſſion on his mind, and to 'plead his excuſe.

'As he dreaded extremely a private 'interview with his father, he was glad 'to find, at his return home, that a great 'deal of company was expected that 'evening. He did not appear till they 'were all met, having purpoſely waſted 'a good deal of time in dreſſing. The 'earl was ſtill ruffled with what had 'paſſed before between him and his ſon; 'and Mr. Courteney obſerved, that his 'looks and behaviour were leſs kind 'than uſual.

'As ſoon as he retired to his apart-'ment, inſtead of going to bed, he ſat 'down to compoſe a letter to his father. 'He began with the higheſt expreſſions 'of grief for having, by an irreſiſtible 'impulſe, engaged his affections with-'out his concurrence: he juſtified his 'choice by every argument that love 'could ſuggeſt in favour of the beloved 'object; he implored the continuance 'of his father's affection; and promiſed 'in every future action the moſt per-'fect ſubmiſſion and obedience.

'This difficult taſk performed, he 'found his mind much eaſier and com-'poſed, as if in reality he had obtained 'the pardon he was ſoliciting for; and 'now reſigned himſelf to all the pleaſ-'ing reveries of ſucceſsful love.

'After a few hours reſt, he roſe, un-'der pretence of going out to ride; and, 'leaving orders with a ſervant to deliver 'his letter to his father at his hour of 'dreſſing, he went immediately to the 'Commons, procured a licence, and 'flew to Chelſea. He found Mrs. Carl-'ton much worſe than when he left 'her; yet joy at ſeeing him again ſeem-'ed to give her new life and ſpirits. She 'called him to her bed ſide; he ac-'quainted her with what he had done; 'ſhe had ſome ſcruples, but the fear of 'leaving her daughter deſtitute over-'balanced them all.

"I am dying," ſaid ſhe, preſſing his 'hand; "the phyſician you ſent was "too ſincere to flatter me. I die con-"tented, ſince I leave my child under "your protection. Let the ceremeny be "performed in my preſence; after that "is over, I ſhall have no farther buſi-"neſs with the world." Miſs Carlton, 'drowned in tears, and almoſt ſinking 'under the violence of her grief, was 'with great difficulty perſuaded to give 'her hand to her lover at ſo ſhocking a 'time; but her dying mother conjured 'her to give her that laſt ſatisfaction. A

'clergyman

'clergyman was instantly provided by 'the faithful nurse: the clerk acted as 'father to the weeping bride; and Mr. 'Courteney's servant and the good 'nurse were witnesses. Never sure was 'there a more melancholy wedding—'the bridegroom's joy was checked by 'sympathising concern—the bride's ten-'der sensibility lost in agonizing woe—'the service was performed with the 'solemn sadness of a funeral.

'As soon as it was over, Mrs. Carl-'ton collected all her remaining strength 'and spirits to pronounce a blessing on 'the new-wedded pair; and straining her 'daughter with a weak embrace, declar-'ed, that she was now easy, and should 'die in peace. Mr. Courteney made 'a genteel present to the clergyman and 'the clerk, and dismissed them: he took 'an affectionate leave of Mrs. Carlton, 'who desired to be left to her private 'devotions; and earnestly recommend-'ing his bride to the care of her nurse, 'he went back to town with a resolution 'to declare his marriage to his father; 'his sentiments being too delicate, and 'his notions of honour too just, to per-'mit him on any consideration of interest 'to conceal the engagements he had en-'tered into, and suffer the woman whom 'he thought worthy to be his wife to 'live under a doubtful character.

'On his return home he found his 'letter had been delivered to the earl: 'His mother, being informed of his ar-'rival, sent for him to her dressing-room, 'where he found her in tears. She told 'him that his father had been in the most 'violent transports of anger, upon re-'ceiving his letter; and she conjured 'him, if he valued her peace, to proceed 'no farther in a design that must inevi-'tably be his ruin.

'Mr. Courteney sighed, and was pre-'paring to answer her, when the earl 'himself entered the room. The im-'pression of his first fury was still visible 'on his countenance. As soon as he 'saw his son, he poured a torrent of re-'proaches on him, inveighing against 'his meanness and ingratitude; then 'suddenly, and with great vehemence, 'uttered the most dreadful imprecations 'on him, if he followed the dictates 'of his despicably-placed passion, and 'married a beggar.

"Oh, hold, my lord!" cried Mr. 'Courteney, throwing himself at his 'feet; "curse me not, for I am already "married." The earl, almost mad 'with rage at this confession, spurned 'him rudely with his foot, and flung 'out of the room, declaring that he 'renounced him for ever.

'Mr. Courteney, stung with indig-'nation at this treatment, rose up, and 'uttered some words of resentment, when 'his attention was called off from the 'affront he had suffered, by the con-'dition in which he observed his mother, 'who, from surprize and terror, had 'swooned, and lay motionless on the 'couch where she had thrown herself. 'Mr. Courteney, excessively shocked at 'this sight, rung the bell for her wo-'man, while he applied himself to give 'her all the assistance he was able. As 'soon as he saw her recovering, he staid 'not to increase her disorder by his pre-'sence, but retired to his apartment; 'and after he had taken all the money 'he had in his cabinet, he left that house 'which was now become dreadful to 'him, and went to the lodgings of a 'young gentleman who had been his 'fellow student at college, and whom 'he had reason to believe his friend, if 'friendship can be acquired by confer-'ring obligations.

'To this young gentleman he un-'loaded his heart, but found not the 'consolation he expected. He expressed 'the utmost astonishment and concern 'for his indiscreet marriage; and, in-'stead of offering him any advice in his 'perplexed situation, or consoling him, 'oppressed as he was by the displeasure 'of his father, manifested in so con-'temptuous a manner, he maintained 'that the earl's anger was just and rea-'sonable, and exclaimed at his impru-'dence in ruining himself for a woman.

'Before the mischief was done, re-'monstrances might have been seasona-'able; but nothing could be more un-'kind than to insist upon an error which 'was already committed, and could 'not be repaired. Mr. Courteney was 'at first surprised at this behaviour in 'a man who had always shewn so deep 'a sense of his kindness, and professed 'the most tender friendship for him: but 'he had still temper enough left to con-'sider, that most people follow their own 'interests, and are at one time grateful 'for their convenience, and at another 'ungrateful for the same reason.

'He left him without taking any no-'tice of the disgust he had conceived;

'and after he had hired lodgings for the 'reception of his wife, he haſtened to 'Chelſea, where he arrived time enough 'to moderate the firſt agonies of her 'grief for the loſs of her mother, who 'had expired a few moments before.

'Having given directions concerning 'the funeral, he forced Mrs. Courte-'ney out of that mournful houſe, and 'carried her to London, applying him-'ſelf with the tendereſt aſſiduity to al-'leviate the ſenſe of her loſs, all his own 'juſt cauſes of uneaſineſs being forgot, 'and his anxiety for the melancholy fu-'ture loſt in his contemplation of the 'happy preſent: ſo true it is, that wed-'ded love ſupplies the want of every 'other bleſſing in life; and as no con-'dition can be truly happy without it, 'ſo none can be abſolutely miſerable 'with it.

CHAP. X.

A FARTHER CONTINUATION OF HER STORY.

'IN the mean time Mr. Courteney 'correſponded privately with his 'mother, whoſe gentle nature had, with 'little difficulty, been ſoftened into a 'forgiveneſs of her ſon's imprudent 'marriage; but all her endeavours to 'reconcile the earl to it had proved in-'effectual. He continued inexorable, 'and peremptorily commanded her 'never to mention that undutiful ſon 'to him more, whom he reprobated for 'ever.

'The counteſs durſt not hazard an 'interview with her ſon, while his fa-'ther's reſentment continued unap-'peaſed; but ſhe allowed him two 'hundred pounds a year out of her pin-'money, and upon this moderate in-'come they lived with more happineſs 'than is often to be found in the higheſt 'affluence.'

'And why not?' interrupted Miſs Woodby here; 'a cottage, with the 'perſon we love, is to be preferred to 'a palace with one to whom intereſt and 'not affection has joined us. I know 'I could be contented to keep ſheep 'with the man I loved. Speak truth, 'my dear Clelia, would you not like 'to be a ſhepherdeſs? O, what a de-'lightful employment, to watch a few 'harmleſs ſheep! to wander through 'groves and fields, or lie reclined upon 'the flowery margin of ſome murmur-'ing ſtream, and liſten to the plaintive 'voice of the nightingale, or the tender 'faithful vows of ſome lovely and be-'loved ſhepherd!'

'What a romantick picture,' ſaid Miſs Courteney, laughing, 'have you 'drawn! It is a mighty pretty one it 'muſt be confeſſed, but there is no re-'ſemblance in it. I remember, when 'I was about fourteen, I had the ſame 'notions of ſhepherds and ſhepherdeſſes; 'but I was ſoon cured. I happened 'to be at the houſe of a country gentle-'man, who managed a large farm of 'his own. One of the ſervants ſaying 'ſomething about the ſhepherd, my 'heart danced at the word. My ima-'gination repreſented to me ſuch a 'pretty figure as we ſee on the ſtage in 'the dramatick paſtoral entertainment 'of Damon and Phillida, in a fine 'green habit, all bedizened with rib-'bands, a neat crook, and a garland 'of flowers. I begged to be permitted 'to go into the fields to ſee the ſhepherd, 'and eagerly inquired if there were no 'ſhepherdeſſes likewiſe; but how was 'I diſappointed!—The ſhepherd was 'an old man in a ragged waiſtcoat, and 'ſo miſerably ſun-burnt, that he might 'have been miſtaken for a mulatto: 'the ſhepherdeſs looked like a witch; 'ſhe was ſitting under a hedge, mend-'ing old ſtockings, with a ſtraw hive 'on her head, and a tattered garment 'on, of as many colours as there were 'patches in it. How diverting it 'would have been to have heard this 'enamoured ſwain ſigh out ſoft things 'to this lovely nymph!'

'Oh! ridiculous,' cried Miſs Wood-by; 'I am ſick at the very thought. 'But, my dear Clelia, go on, I beſeech 'you, with your ſtory.'

'I have not come to my own ſtory 'yet,' ſaid Miſs Courteney; 'all 'that you have heard has been only an 'introduction to it; and I have given 'you the hiſtory of my parents in the 'words, as near as I can remember, of 'my mother; for ſhe loved ſcribbling, 'and committed the principal incidents 'of her life to paper, which for my in-'ſtruction ſhe permitted me to read: I 'ſay inſtruction, for ſhe was a woman 'of fine underſtanding and deep think-'ing; and ſhe had interſperſed through 'her little narrative many beautiful and

'juſt

'just reflections, and many observations and useful maxims, such as her reading, which was very comprehensive, and her experience, furnished her with.'

'Proceed, my dear Clelia,' said Miss Woodby, observing Henrietta paused here; 'I am impatient to hear more.'—'If you please,' said Miss Courteney, 'we will drink tea first.'—'I have just two hours to stay with you,' replied Miss Woodby, looking at her watch; 'if I am at home by nine o'clock, which is my aunt's hour for supper, it will do.' Henrietta then ordered tea, which was soon dispatched, and she resumed her story in this manner.

'My father, who was very desirous of conciliating his elder brother's affections at least, wrote to him, he being now upon his travels, and gave him an account of his marriage; but his letter, though conceived in the most tender and respectful terms, produced a cruel and supercilious answer, which not only took away all hope of his proving a mediator between him and his father, but proved that he had in him no longer a friend or brother.

'His affairs were in this desperate situation when my mother became pregnant. A distant relation of my father's now took an interest in this event, and being very rich and ambitious of making a family, he declared that, if the child was a son, he would adopt him and make him his heir. You may imagine this design was received with great joy: the old gentleman was very assiduous in his visits to my mother during her pregnancy, and seemed extremely happy in the thoughts of perpetuating his name; an ambition very common to persons of low extraction, who, by industry and thrift, have risen to great riches: for he was only by marriage a relation to my father, and had been too much neglected on account of the meanness of his original. But all these flattering expectations were destroyed by my birth, which I had reason to say proved a misfortune to my parents. The capricious old man was so greatly chagrined at his disappointment, that he transferred all his favours to another cousin, who was so lucky as to present him with a son to succeed to his fortune, and continue his obscure name to posterity.

'My brother's birth happened a year afterwards, and unfortunately for him a year too late. My father still continued to draw his whole income from the bounty of his mother, who was a constant but fruitless mediator in his behalf: her death, which happened about three years after his marriage, was an irreparable loss to him; for it was not improbable but the lenient hand of time, which weakens the force of every passion, joined to her tender solicitations, might have effected a reconciliation between his father and him; but this hope was now no more: the countess bequeathed my father all the money she had saved, which was but a very small sum; for she had always given with a liberal hand to the poor, though with so little ostentation, that it was supposed she had saved some thousands out of her pin-money, for she was less expensive than any other woman of her rank in England; but it was not till after my father's marriage that she began to save, and then only for him.

'Six hundred pounds was all that was found in her cabinet, which some months after her decease was paid to my father with every circumstance of contempt.

'These repeated calamities were so far from lessening the love of my father and mother, that they seemed to redouble their tenderness; seeking in each other that happiness which fortune denied them, and which they were always sure to find in their own virtue and mutual affection.

'My father, who had had a very liberal education, employed the greatest part of his time in the instruction of his children: under his tuition I acquired the French and Italian languages; by my mother I was taught every useful accomplishment for a young woman in my situation; nor did my father's narrow circumstances hinder him from procuring me those which were suitable to my birth. My brother had no other tutor but this excellent father, who qualified him for an university; and at fourteen years of age he was sent to that of Leyden, and I have never seen him since.

'In the mean time the earl my grandfather, who still continued inexorable,

'was taken off suddenly by an apoplectick fit; and having never altered his will, which he made immediately after the marriage of my father, he found he was cut off with a shilling. This stroke, as it was always expected, was less sensibly felt than another which immediately followed it. That relation, to whose estate my father was to succeed, having buried his wife, married a young woman, who in a year afterwards brought him a son to inherit his fortune.

'My father, now seeing no prospect of any provision for his children, fell into a deep melancholy: he had, by the interest of some of his friends, obtained a place which brought him in between three and four hundred a year; but out of this it was impossible to save much. The uneasiness of mind which he laboured under corrupted his blood; he was seized with a decay, which carried him off in a few months, and deprived his wife of the best husband, his children of the best father that ever was.

'In his last illness he had wrote to his brother, and recommended his helpless family to his compassion; but that nobleman, whose avarice was his strongest passion, and whose resentment against his brother was kept up by the arts of his wife, her family, though noble, being very poor, and therefore dependent upon him, took no other notice of my father's last request, than to send my mother a bank bill for an hundred pounds; declaring at the same time, that it was all the assistance she must ever expect from him; and with this heroick act of generosity he silenced the soft pleadings of nature, and persuaded himself that he had done his duty.

'My mother, being young with child when my father died, miscarried; and by that accident, together with her continual grief, she fell into a languishing illness, which threatened a short period to her days. Eight hundred pounds was all that my father left: from this small sum a widow and two children were to draw their future subsistence. What a melancholy prospect! however, my brother, who was then about seventeen, had made such great proficiency in learning, that, notwithstanding his youth, he was recommended by the professors of the university to have the care of some English youths who studied there, which afforded him a decent subsistence.

'My mother having placed eight hundred pounds in the hands of a rich merchant, a man of birth and liberal education, who had been a friend of my father's, and gave her very good interest for it, she disposed of all her furniture, and with the money arising from the sale, set out with me for Bath, the waters being prescribed to her by her physician.

'Not being able to support the expence of living in the town, she took lodgings in a pleasant village, about three miles distant from it; and here, feeling her distemper daily gaining ground, she prepared for death, with a resignation that was only interrupted by her anxiety for me.

'It was not indeed easy to form any plan for my future subsistence, which would not subject me to a situation very unfit for my birth. Had my brother been provided for, she would have made no scruple of sinking that small sum that was left into an annuity for my life, which with œconomy might support me above necessity and dependence. She wrote to my brother, and desired his advice with regard to me. My brother, as if he had entered into her views, in his answer conjured her to have no solicitude about him, since, with the education he had received, he could not fail of supporting himself in the character of a gentleman, but to dispose of that money in any manner which might be most for my advantage.

'My mother shed tears of tender satisfaction over this letter, so full of duty to her, and affection for me; but the more generous and disinterested appeared her son, the less was she capable of taking a resolution, which, if any disappointment happened to him, must leave him without any resource.

'You may be sure, my dear Miss Woodby, I was not very forward to fix her purpose; for I could not bear the thought of being the only person, in our little distressed family, to whom a subsistence was secured. While my mother was thus fluctuating, she was visited in her retirement by Lady Manning, a widow lady of a very plentiful

'fortune,

'fortune, with whom she had been in 'some degree of intimacy during the 'life of my father.

'This lady shewed great fondness for 'me; and my mother imparting to her 'her difficulties with regard to settling 'me, Lady Manning begged her to 'make herself quite easy, for that she 'would take me under her own care.

"Miss Courteney," said she, "will "do me honour by accepting my house "for an asylum, and I and my daughter "will think ourselves happy in such an "agreeable companion." My mother 'was extremely pleased with this offer; 'and Lady Manning pressed me to go 'with her to London, for which place 'she was to set out in a few days.

'I was so much shocked at the pro-'posal of leaving my mother in the dan-'gerous condition she was judged to be, 'that I did not receive Lady Manning's 'offer with that sense of her intended 'kindness which she doubtless expected; 'and when my mother, wholly governed 'by the consideration of my interest, 'urged me to go with Lady Manning, 'I burst into a violent passion of tears, 'vehemently protesting that I would 'never leave her; and lamenting her 'causeless distrust of my affection, in 'supposing that I could be prevailed 'upon, by any prospect of advantage to 'myself, to separate from her.

'I observed Lady Manning reddened 'at these words, which she understood 'as a reproach for her making so im-'proper a proposal, and which I really 'desired she should: for I was highly 'disgusted with her want of delicacy, 'in desiring me to leave my mother, and 'believing it possible that I could con-'sent.

'I saw pleasure in my mother's eyes 'at this artless expression of my tender-'ness for her; but at the same time I 'thought I could perceive by the turn 'of her countenance that she was ap-'prehensive I had disobliged Lady Man-'ning; therefore I endeavoured to re-'move her fears by the strongest assur-'ances of gratitude to that lady. She 'received those assurances with a little 'superciliousness at first, but that pre-'sently wore off; and at parting she re-'newed her professions of friendship to 'my mother, and promises of a parent's 'care of me.

'She left Bath three days afterwards, 'so that we did not see her again, which 'made my mother a little uneasy; but 'we had soon a very kind letter from her, 'in which she repeated all her former 'offers, and expressed great tenderness 'for me.

'At her return from London, she 'passed through Bath in her way to her 'country-seat; and, finding my mother 'much worse, she redoubled her pro-'fessions of affection for me, and was 'so lavish in her promises, that she left 'her quite easy on my account. Indeed, 'notwithstanding what I have suffered 'from Lady Manning, I shall ever 'think myself obliged to her for contri-'buting so greatly towards that com-'posure of mind which my mother felt, 'from the time that she thought me se-'cure of a retreat, till it would suit with 'my brother's circumstances to take me 'under his own care.

'I will not, my dear Miss Woodby, 'enlarge upon the last three months of 'my mother's life, which were spent in 'a constant preparation for her end. 'Indeed, the innocence of her manners, 'and the unfeigned piety that shone 'through her conduct, made her whole 'life one continued preparation for that 'awful moment, so dreadful to the 'wicked; so full of peace, confidence, 'and holy joy, to the good. In fine, I 'lost this excellent mother, and my 'bleeding heart still feels her loss.'

The tears, which at this tender remembrance flowed from Miss Courteney's eyes, made a pathetick pause in her relation; but recovering herself, she proceeded, as will be found in the following book.

HENRIETTA.

BOOK THE SECOND.

CHAP. I.

IN WHICH HENRIETTA ENTERS UPON HER OWN STORY, AND SHEWS, THAT TO CONFER BENEFITS, IS NOT ALWAYS A PROOF OF BENEVOLENCE.

'THE worthy merchant,' resumed Miss Courteney, 'whom I mentioned to 'you, had the goodness 'to come to Bath, upon 'the news of my mother's 'extreme danger. He arrived time 'enough to receive her last intreaties, 'that he would continue his friendship 'to me. I was then entered into my 'twentieth year, and chose him for my 'guardian; he would have taken me 'with him to his house, but my promise 'being engaged to Lady Manning, I 'was obliged to decline his obliging 'offer.

'I sent her an account of my mother's 'death. Mr. Damer, so was the merchant called, would not return to 'town till he saw me safely disposed of.

'About three days after I had written 'to Lady Manning, I received a letter 'from her, which was brought by one 'of her servants; in which, after the 'usual compliments of condolence, she 'desired I would set out immediately 'with the person whom she had sent to 'attend me. My guardian, for so I 'used now to call Mr. Damer, coming 'in, I told him I must prepare to be 'gone immediately, and gave him Lady 'Manning's letter to read.

"How are you to go, Miss?" said he, 'after he had looked over the letter. 'As I never doubted but Lady Manning had sent her post-chaise or chariot for me, I told him I supposed 'there was a carriage come with the 'messenger.

"O yes," replied Mr. Damer, "there "is a very good pillion, and you are to "ride behind the footman. I took "notice of the equipage as I came in, "but I shall not permit you to perform "a journey of thirty miles in that manner: therefore, Miss, I would have "you send a letter to the lady by her "messenger, and inform her that your "guardian will convey you safe to her "seat."

'I was as much pleased with this kind 'attention in Mr. Damer, as I was 'shocked and surprised at the ungenteel 'manner in which Lady Manning had 'sent for me: however, I concealed my 'thoughts of it, and wrote such a letter 'as my guardian desired me. The next 'morning at eight o'clock, a post-chaise 'was ready at the door, and Mr. Damer 'attending; all my cloaths had been 'packed up the night before, and we 'set out immediately.

'Lady Manning received us very politely, and detained Mr. Damer to dinner. I thought I could observe something forced in the respect she seemed 'to pay me; and I was particularly disgusted with her using the words *your guardian* every moment, as if in derision of the title I had to one.

'When Mr. Damer went away, he 'took an opportunity to speak to me 'apart, and made me promise him, if 'I should

'I should have any reason to be dis-
'pleased with my situation, that I would
'write to him plainly, and he would
'come himself and fetch me away.
'This tender solicitude in the good old
'man affected me very sensibly; and I
'could not help shedding tears when I
'saw him drive away.

'Lady Manning was extremely in-
'quisitive about his connexion with me,
'and asked me a great many questions.
"I am very glad," said she, "your
"affairs are in the hands of so wise a
"man; for surely, he who can raise a
"large estate out of a trifle, as has been
"the case with Mr. Damer, must needs
"be a very wise man; and I don't
"doubt but he will manage your *for-*
"*tune* to the best advantage."

'I was greatly displeased with the first
'part of this speech, and particularly
'with the manner in which the word
'Fortune was drauled out.

"The poor trifle I have, Madam,"
'replied I, "does not deserve to be
"termed a fortune."

"I assure you," said she, "it was
"very kind in a man of Mr. Damer's
"substance to trouble himself with such
"inconsiderable matters; and it is a
"great thing for you to be permitted to
"call such a man Guardian."

"Very true, Madam," replied I, with
'some warmth; "and I believe Mr.
"Damer thinks it no discredit to be
"called so by a child of Mr. Courte-
"ney's, whatever her fortune may be."

'I observed Lady Manning to redden
'at this reply, which at that time sur-
'prised me, and I could not conceive
'the reason of it; but I soon found that
'it was a mortal crime, in her eyes, to
'pretend to derive any advantage from
'birth. There was nothing which she
'seemed to hold in greater contempt
'than family-pride; and indeed, when
'unseasonably exerted, it is contempti-
'ble; but it was plain that Lady Man-
'ning did not think meanly of the for-
'tuitous advantage of being well-born,
'because she envied those who possessed
'that advantage; and, though the
'daughter of a soap-boiler herself, she
'was extremely fond of being thought
'to have ancestors; and it was to gra-
'tify her pride, that her husband, who
'was a rich citizen, by trade a brewer,
'got himself knighted, that, together
'with a very large jointure, he might
'leave his wife the title of Lady.'

'Surely,' interrupted Miss Woodby,
'this woman had no good intentions
'when she invited you to her house: it
'is impossible that such low creatures
'can have any notion of friendship or
'generosity.'

'You have guessed truly,' replied
Miss Courteney; 'it was to gratify her
'pride, to have the daughter of a gentle-
'man subjected to her caprice, and de-
'pendent on her bounty, that made her
'so solicitous to have me with her: but
'although I did not make these reflec-
'tions immediately, yet I was so dis-
'gusted by this first conversation, that
'I could not promise myself any great
'happiness in such society.

'Her daughter was now introduced
'to me, a tall aukward thing about se-
'venteen: she was an heiress; and be-
'ing taught to believe that riches give
'birth, beauty, wit, and every desirable
'quality, she held every one in contempt
'who was not possessed of this advan-
'tage; and because she had it herself,
'she supposed she had all the others.

'Whatever documents were given her,
'they were always introduced with—
"Consider, Miss, what a fortune you
"are!—A young lady of your for-
"tune!" How was it possible for a
'girl, thus tutored, not to derive in-
'solence from the consideration of her
'fortune?

'The governess, who had the care of
'this young lady, was not very likely to
'enlarge her notions: her only recom-
'mendation to such a trust was, that she
'could jabber corrupted French with-
'out either sense or grammar, and Miss
'was taught to *parler françoise* in a
'broad provincial dialect; for this go-
'verness had never seen Paris, and per-
'haps had never been out of the little
'village where she was born and bred,
'and conversed only with peasants, till
'she came to England to teach language
'and fine breeding to a rich heiress. It
'was very natural for Lady Manning
'to make such a choice, who doubtless
'thought it a great distinction to have a
'foreigner for governess to her daugh-
'ter.'

'Nay, my dear,' interrupted Miss
Woodby, 'Lady Manning, in this par-
'ticular, does not differ from many
'persons of the first quality, who com-
'mit the education of their daughters to
'low vulgar creatures, merely because
'they are French; creatures that, in

'Paris,

'Paris, or in any of the chief cities in 'the provinces, would not be thought 'qualified for a chambermaid to a wo- 'man of any fashion, when driven into 'England on account of their religion, 'as they all pretend, though perhaps it 'is for want of bread in their own 'country, derive such distinction from 'their flimsy sacks, their powdered hair, 'and their speaking French, that they 'are thought the fittest persons in the 'world to form the manners of young 'girls of quality. How absurd should 'we think it in a French woman of 'quality to entertain an awkward York- 'shire girl with a coarse clownish accent, 'as English governess to her daughter, 'to teach her the language, and correct 'her pronunciation? And yet not one 'in twenty of the Mademoiselles in the 'houses of our nobility and our French 'boarding-schools are better qualified 'for such an office. But I beg pardon, 'my dear, for interrupting you so long: 'I long to hear what sort of a life you 'lived in this rich despicable family.'

'Truly,' said Miss Courteney, 'it 'was not very agreeable. When Lady 'Manning and I were alone, she used 'to entertain me with an account of her 'forefathers; she reckoned up among 'them half a dozen sheriffs, three lord- 'mayors, and a long train of aldermen. 'She lamented the death of her husband 'most pathetically; for if he had lived 'two years longer, he would have been 'elected lord-mayor, and she would have 'lived in the Mansion-house, and been 'queen of the city. These were her 'words.

'When we were at table, and the ser- 'vants attending, she used to turn the 'discourse upon the misfortunes of my 'father, lament the sad condition to 'which my mother and I were reduced 'by his death, express great anxiety 'about my brother, and enter into a 'minute discussion of our affairs.

'When there was company present, 'she would take notice that I was me- 'lancholy, and tell me that I must not 'take misfortunes to heart, and then 'sigh as if she was extremely affected 'with them herself; by which she recom- 'mended me to her visitors as an object 'of compassion, and never failed by that 'means to produce some instances of 'neglect towards me: so powerfully did 'that consideration operate upon most 'minds.

'She would sharply reprehend her 'daughter for any supposed want of ci- 'vility to me, and pass over in silence 'any real one; telling her, that if Miss 'Courteney had not a fortune, yet she 'was a gentlewoman as well as herself, 'and that nobody should be despised for 'being poor.

'Such were the continued mortifica- 'tions that I was obliged to endure from 'this generous benefactress; yet I ought 'not to call them mortifications, be- 'cause they only excited my contempt. 'About that time I received a letter from 'my brother, in which he informed me 'that he was going to travel with a 'young English nobleman, whose go- 'vernor had died suddenly at Leyden, 'and whom he was appointed to succeed 'upon a very advantageous footing, on 'account of his birth: he desired me to 'draw upon him for what money I had 'occasion for.

'I received these insults therefore with 'the more indifference, as I knew I could 'put an end to them when I pleased, by 'quitting Lady Manning's house, which 'I could now do without any inconveni- 'ence to myself; and, foreseeing that 'this indelicacy in her treatment of me 'must necessarily end in something too 'coarse for me to dissemble my resent- 'ment, I was willing to stay till she 'shewed herself in her true colours, 'which would be my justification when- 'ever I quitted her.

CHAP. II.

WHEREIN FAMILY-PRIDE AWAKENS THOSE NATURAL AFFECTIONS WHICH FAMILY-PRIDE HAD SUPPRESSED.

'IT was not long before I had this 'opportunity. She desired me one 'day to walk with her in the garden, 'having something to communicate to 'me greatly to my advantage; and, 'after a profound silence of about ten 'minutes, she looked archly at me, and 'asked me if I could guess what she had 'been doing for me. "Indeed I can- "not, Madam," replied I. "Well, "then, I will tell you," said she; "no- "thing less, I assure you, than provid- "ing you a husband."—"Indeed!" 'said I, laughing; "and pray, Madam, "who is this intended husband?"— "Come, come," said she, gravely, "be- "fore

" fore I tell you who he is, you muſt
" promiſe to make no ſilly objections;
" ſuch as age, not being a fine gentle-
" man, and the like. The perſon I
" have in my eye for you is a ſober ſtaid
" man, and bleſſed with means to ſup-
" port you handſomely, without de-
" pending upon any body."—" That
" indeed is ſomething!" replied I; " but
" who is this perſon, Madam?"—" I
" have a good mind," ſaid ſhe, " to
" tantalize you a little, by keeping you
" in ſuſpence: but, in ſhort, the perſon
" I mean is honeſt Mr. Jones."

' Although I expected ſome very ab-
' ſurd and impertinent propoſal, yet my
' imagination had never reached any
' thing ſo ridiculous as this Mr. Jones;
' for I had had his hiſtory from himſelf
' ſome time before. He had been taken
' by her father out of a pariſh-ſchool,
' becauſe he underſtood writing and ac-
' counts, to keep his books for him.
' Upon his young miſtreſs's marriage,
' he was advanced to be a clerk in her
' huſband's office; and here, having
' ſcraped up a little money, he made ſome
' ſucceſsful ventures in trade, and had
' acquired about two thouſand pounds.
' After Sir John's death, my lady made
' him her ſteward, with a ſalary of fifty
' pounds a year; and he was in this ho-
' nourable and lucrative poſt when ſhe
' propoſed him as a huſband for me.

' My ſurprize was ſucceeded by a
' ſtrong inclination to laugh, which,
' indeed, I took no pains to ſuppreſs.
" And pray, Madam," ſaid I, " has
" this grave perſonage expreſſed any
" good liking to me?"

" I hope you are not jeſting," ſaid ſhe.
—" Why, did you expect me to be ſe-
" rious," replied I, " upon ſuch a pro-
" poſal?"

" Such a propoſal, Miſs!" repeated
' Lady Manning, colouring; " if my
" daughter was in your circumſtances,
" I ſhould not be ſorry ſuch a propoſal
" was made to her."—" Very likely,
" Madam," returned I; " and it might
" be more proper than to Mr. Courte-
" ney's daughter, and the niece of the
" Earl of——"

' This may look like vanity, my dear
' Miſs Woodby; but I confeſs I was
' exceſſively ſhocked at her levelling me
' with her daughter, when riches were
' out of the queſtion; for I was con-
' tented to allow her all the ſuperiority
" ſhe could derive from them. Lady
' Manning made me a ſmarter anſwer,
' and delivered with more calmneſs than
' I expected from her.

" If the Earl of——," ſaid ſhe, " be-
" haved more like an uncle to you,
" Miſs, it would be oftener remembered
" that you are his niece; but, as it is,
" I do not know whether it may not be
" an advantage to you to have it forgot;
" for there are very few gentlemen of
" ſmall fortunes who would chuſe an
" indigent woman of quality for a
" wife."

" I hope, however, Madam," ſaid I,
" that none but a gentleman will pre-
" ſume to offer himſelf to me; and I
" ſhall take care not to juſtify my uncle's
" neglect, by encouraging any impro-
" per addreſs."—" You are very much
" in the right, Miſs," ſaid Lady Man-
' ning; " one unfortunate marriage in
" a family is enough."

" 'Tis well, Madam," replied I, burſt-
' ing into tears; " you mean my fa-
" ther's, no doubt; but it was no other-
" wiſe unfortunate than that it had not
" the ſanction of my grandfather's con-
" ſent: my mother's excellencies juſti-
" fied his choice; and ſhe might have
" had a fortune too, though not equal
" to what he might have expected, if it
" had not been truſted in the hands of
" a villain, who broke to leave his own
" children fortunes, as many other vil-
" lains have done."

' This laſt hint threw Lady Manning
' into ſome confuſion; for it was ſu-
' ſpected that her grandfather, who was
' a corn-factor, had done the like: and,
' whether it was that ſhe was afraid of
' my ſpeaking ſtill plainer, or that ſhe
' was really concerned for having given
' me ſuch juſt reaſon to complain of her,
' ſhe thought fit to beg my pardon for
' what was paſt; and aſſured me, that
' whatever I might think of her, ſhe was
' unalterably my friend.

' In my firſt emotions of reſentment,
' I had reſolved to write to Mr. Damer,
' and acquaint him with the treatment
' I had met with, which I knew would
' bring him immediately to my relief:
' but I conſidered that my leaving Lady
' Manning in diſguſt might have diſ-
' agreeable conſequences; for ſhe would
' not fail to repreſent every thing in ſuch
' a manner as to make me appear in the
' wrong; and the world ſeldom eſpouſes
' the part of the oppreſſed, becauſe they
' who oppreſs have that on their ſide

'which is sure to exculpate them—they 'are rich. Besides, the summer was 'now almost past, and she talked of go- 'ing soon to London, where I could take 'an opportunity of leaving her without 'any noise, and of putting myself im- 'mediately under my guardian's pro- 'tection; but I was delivered from this 'disagreeable situation sooner than I 'expected, and by means which I had 'then no reason to hope for.

'Lady Manning was desirous of 'spending a few weeks at Bath before 'she returned to London. A lady hap- 'pened to be there at that time, who, I 'afterwards learned, was my great aunt 'by my father's side, and had followed 'the example of every branch of his 'family, in taking no notice of him 'after his marriage.

'This lady, Lady Manning became 'acquainted with; and not knowing 'the relation in which she stood to me, 'she began one day to exclaim against 'the pride and folly of people, in low 'circumstances, who expect to be con- 'sidered on account of their birth, pro- 'ducing me as an instance, and relating 'how I had refused an honest man whom 'she had proposed to me for a husband, 'because he was not a gentleman, re- 'peating my own words with a sneer; 'and therefore—*Not a proper match for 'Mr. Courteney's daughter.*

'This being the first time she had 'named me, Lady Meadows (for it was 'her) cried out, in some astonishment— "What, Madam, is that pretty young "lady," (so she was pleased to say) "that I saw with you once in the rooms, "Mr. Courteney's daughter?"

'Lady Manning answering in the 'affirmative—"Good Heaven!" said 'Lady Meadows, "and have I lived "to hear one of my family spoken of "with such contempt?"

"One of your family, Madam!" in- 'terrupted Lady Manning, surprized.

"Yes," said Lady Meadows, "one "of my family, who has done you too "much honour to accept of an obliga- "tion from you: how could you pre- "sume to propose your scoundrel stew- "ard for a husband to my niece? But "I will take her out of your hands im- "mediately: you shall be paid for her "board; my nephew's daughter shall "not lie under an obligation to any up- "start cit."

'It is not to be doubted that Lady 'Manning replied with great bitter- 'ness; but Lady Meadows, from whom 'I afterwards had these particulars, was 'in too much emotion to listen to her. 'She immediately quitted the walk, for 'they were on the Parade; and getting 'into her chariot, told Lady Manning 'that she was going to her lodgings to 'fetch me away.

'Thus, my dear Miss Woodby, did 'I recover a relation, a friend, a bene- 'factress, in a woman, who for many 'years had had no intercourse with my 'father, and disclaimed him, as the rest 'of his relations had done, on account 'of his marriage: she, whose resent- 'ment could not be softened by time, 'whose compassion could not be a- 'wakened by distress; she who had 'silenced the soft pleadings of nature, 'yet listened to the voice of pride; and, 'from a sense of the affront that had 'been offered her family in the husband 'proposed to me, she did all that bene- 'volence would have suggested to a 'better mind.

'You may imagine I was greatly 'surprized, when a servant informed me 'that Lady Meadows was at the door 'in her chariot, and desired I would 'come to her. I had often heard my 'father mention this aunt of his, from 'whom, before his marriage, he had 'great expectations. I went down stairs 'in much confusion of mind, not know- 'ing what this summons could mean, 'yet presaging some good; and as soon 'as I appeared, Lady Meadows let down 'the glass, and desired me to come into 'the chariot. Her footman instantly 'opening the door, I got in, and placed 'myself by her, expecting when she 'would speak, and anxiously longing 'for an explanation.

'Lady Meadows gazed at me in 'silence during some moments; then 'taking my hand—"My dear," said 'she, in a tender accent, "you are very "like your father. Poor Ned!" added 'she, with some emotion, "he was not "kindly used." The tears streamed 'from my eyes at this mention of my 'father. I observed Lady Meadows 'was greatly affected. "Oh Nature!" 'thought I, "why were thy tender feel- "ings suppressed so long?"—"Don't "weep, my dear," said she; "I will "be both father and mother to you."

'Had

'Had I been in another place, I 'should have thrown myself at her feet, 'to express my gratitude for this affec-'tionate promise. I could not speak at 'that moment; I took her hand, kissed 'it, and wet it with my tears. She 'kindly wiped my eyes with her own 'handkerchief; then looking again in 'my face, as if with pleasure—"You "are like your mother too, I suppose," 'said she: "I never saw her; but I "have heard that she was very hand-"some."

'This obliging manner of mention-'ing my mother, which I so little ex-'pected from her, quite subdued me. "My dear," said she, "what is past "cannot be helped; you are my daugh-"ter now; you shall be no longer ob-"liged to Lady Manning. That wo-"man," pursued she, rising in her tem-'per as she spoke, "has herself told me "the insolence of her treatment of you." 'She then gave me an account of what 'had passed upon the Parade, as I have 'already related to you.

"Lady Manning thought to have "injured me in your opinion," said I; "and she has made me happy, by a-"wakening your tenderness for me: I "now forgive her for all her insults."

"But I never will forgive her," in-'terrupted Lady Meadows. "As soon "as we come to my lodgings, you shall "send for your cloaths, and never more "enter her doors."

'I was very unwilling to part with 'Lady Manning in this manner, and 'pressed my aunt to allow me to go and 'take leave of her civilly; but she posi-'tively refused, and I found she could 'not endure the least contradiction, 'which is indeed one of her foibles. I 'therefore contented myself with writ-'ing to her, and acquainted her with 'Lady Meadows's resolution in my fa-'vour: I made the best apology I could 'for leaving her so suddenly, and ex-'pressed some concern at the misunder-'standing there was between Lady Mea-'dows and her, which made it impos-'sible for me to wait on her.

'Politeness, my dear, is sometimes a 'great tax upon sincerity. Lady Man-'ning had certainly treated me very ill, 'and, in strict justice, I was not obliged 'to shew any respect to a woman who 'had violated all the laws of hospitality 'with regard to me: but custom de-'cides arbitrarily in these cases; and 'persons, in a certain condition of life, 'make a science of hating one another 'with all the good-breeding and com-'plaisance imaginable.

'Lady Manning, according to this 'rule, returned a civil answer to my 'letter, wished me all happiness, and, 'wherever she went, let loose all the 'asperity of her tongue against me. 'One calumny propagated by her hurt 'me more than the rest: she confidently 'reported that I had sacrificed my con-'science to my interest; and that, upon 'my aunt's promising to settle her whole 'fortune upon me at her death, I had 'turned Roman Catholick; for Lady 'Meadows had been perverted to that 'religion by her husband, and, like all 'proselytes, was extremely bigotted to 'her new principles.

'I thought it became me to discoun-'tenance this report as much as pos-'sible; therefore I was more regular 'than ever in my attendance at church; 'and although my aunt, after we came 'to London, would often have engaged 'me to go to mass with her, intending, 'no doubt, to work me to her purpose 'by degrees; yet I constantly and stea-'dily refused to gratify her in this par-'ticular, though in every other I studied 'to oblige her as much as possible. She 'would often engage me in arguments 'upon the subject of religion, which I 'generally strove to evade; and when I 'found that would not do, I defended 'myself with great courage, and with 'so much success, that she would tell 'me with an air, half smiling, half 'angry, I was too hard for her, and 'that she would consign me over to her 'chaplain.

'This chaplain, whose name is Dan-'vers, is a priest of the order of the 'Jesuits: he had been recommended to 'Lady Meadows by her late husband, 'whose memory she adored; and this 'powerful interest, joined to the Jesuit's 'insinuating manners, acquired him so 'great credit with Lady Meadows, that 'she governed herself wholly by his 'advice; and that the great work of 'her salvation might be perfected, and 'her every word and action be under 'his direction, he lived in the house 'with her, where he ruled in a most ar-'bitrary manner; his absolute empire 'over the conscience of my lady, ren-

'dering his dominion over all that had 'any dependance on her as uncontrouled 'as he could desire.'

Here Henrietta stopped, observing her friend to look at her watch, which produced an exclamation that the reader will find in the following chapter.

CHAP. III.

WHICH INTRODUCES A JESUIT TO THE ACQUAINTANCE OF THE READER.

'OH! my dear,' cried Miss Woodby, 'I am in despair to find 'it is so late, I must leave you now; but 'I am so impatient to hear the rest of 'your story, that, if you will give me 'leave, I will breakfast with you to-'morrow, and as soon as my eager 'curiosity is satisfied, we will go to-'gether to Mrs. Egret's.'

She then desired a chair might be sent for; 'And in the mean time,' said she, 'we will step into the shop; I will make 'a little purchase on purpose to see your 'landlady, whom you seem to dislike 'so much.'

'Indeed I do not like her,' replied Henrietta, 'and yet she is mighty 'civil.'—'Well,' said Miss Woodby, tripping down stairs, 'I'll give you 'my opinion of her when I have studied 'her a little.'

Miss Courteney was following her into the shop, when perceiving the young gentleman, who was there the day before, in discourse with Mrs. Eccles, she pulled Miss Woodby by the sleeve, whispering, 'Don't go in now, there is 'somebody with her.'—'Indeed, but 'I will,' replied Miss Woodby, who saw the glimpse of a laced coat, for which she had always a violent passion, 'and 'so shall you likewise.'

Saying this, she pulled Miss Courteney in, and, swimming up to Mrs. Eccles, bid her, with a lively air, show her some ribbands and blond laces.

The young gentleman, as soon as the ladies appeared, made them a profound bow; and, fixing his eyes on Henrietta's face, seemed to contemplate it with astonishment and delight.

Mean time Miss Woodby was playing over a thousand fantastick airs, and uttering as many pretty absurdities, which she had heard admired coming from the mouths of beauties, without reflecting that she herself was no beauty. Mrs. Eccles perceived her foible immediately, and took occasion, when she was shewing her some new-fashioned caps, to tell her, that such a one would suit the air of her face; that this coloured ribband was most proper to shew the lustre of her eyes; observed that she had wonderful fine hair, and begged to know who cut it.

Henrietta, a little in pain for her friend, to whom personal compliments were by no means proper, endeavoured to relieve the confusion she supposed she was under, by diverting her attention to something else, and asked her opinion of some Dresden work that was lying before them. But Miss Woodby had no leisure to answer her; for the gentleman, conceiving that it was easier to introduce some conversation to her than to Miss Courteney, whose mingled modesty and dignity struck him with awe, addressed a trifling question to Miss Woodby, which she answered with such an affected sprightliness as encouraged him to talk to her with the familiarity of an old acquaintance.

Miss Woodby was excessively delighted with his address to her, and played off all the artillery of eyes, air, and wit, upon him. Happy was it for the young gentleman, who courageously bore all her attacks, that this fire was given from two little grey eyes, over which her forehead hung like a precipice; and that this form, which was thrown into a thousand different attitudes to strike him, was so distorted by nature as to leave little more for affectation to do.

The chair had been waiting half an hour without Miss Woodby's perceiving it, when Henrietta, who was not at all pleased with the figure her friend made, told her, smiling, that she would not let her stay any longer, for fear she should by that means be disappointed of her company at breakfast the next day.

'I vow, my dear, you are in the 'right,' cried Miss Woodby, 'to send 'me away; for my aunt is waiting sup-'per for me—I am a giddy creature.' She then desired Mrs. Eccles to put up the things she had bought; for, in the gaiety of her heart, she had bought a great many. Mrs. Eccles obeyed, telling her she hoped she should have the

pleasure

pleasure of serving so agreeable a lady again.

The gentleman would hand her into her chair, which Miss Woodby accepted with a very gallant air, after she had assured Miss Courteney aloud, that she would be with her in the morning; and told her in a whisper, that her landlady was a very pretty behaved woman.

Henrietta went up to her chamber directly, to the great disappointment of the young gentleman, who, finding there was no probability of seeing her again that night, went away disburthened of a heart which he had left with the charming stranger.

She was now summoned to supper by Mrs. Eccles, who was full of praises of the young lady her visiter. 'This has 'been a lucky day to me,' said she, 'for I have let my first floor at a very 'good price, considering the season of 'the year.'—'I am glad of it,' said the young lady. 'That is very obliging 'of you, my dear Miss,' said Mrs. Eccles; 'and you may still have the use 'of the dining-room when you have 'company; for my lord will be seldom 'at home in the day, these lodgings be-'ing only to sleep in. But how do you 'like him? Is he not a mighty agree-'able man? Dear soul! not a bit of 'pride in him!'

'Do you mean the gentleman I saw 'in the shop?' said Miss Courteney. 'Yes,' returned Mrs. Eccles, 'he is 'a lord, I assure you.'—'Well,' said Miss Courteney, 'I am glad you are not 'to lose one lodger without getting 'another, for I must leave you to-mor-'row.'—'How!' replied Mrs. Eccles, with an altered countenance, 'I hope 'you are only in jest.'—'Upon my word 'I am in earnest,' said Miss Courteney. 'I am sorry for it, Madam,' resumed she, 'but this is very short notice.'

Henrietta was a little surprized at the peevishness with which she spoke these last words, so different from her usual complaisance: but she would not seem to take notice of it, and only told her, that it was not her design to stay more than a few days at this end of the town, having affairs to transact in the city, which would oblige her for her own convenience to take lodgings there.

Mrs. Eccles appeared satisfied with this answer, though a cloud hung upon her brow during the whole time they were at supper, which Miss Courteney shortened as much as possible, and retired to her chamber, with new prejudices against her landlady, that made her rejoice in the prospect of getting away the next day.

Miss Woodby came according to her promise to breakfast, in a world of spirits; and had scarce taken a seat, when she asked after the charming fellow who entertained her so agreeably in the shop.

Henrietta told her, she saw no more of him; 'for the moment you was gone,' said she, 'I went up stairs: but really, 'my dear, I wonder you seemed so 'pleased with his conversation; me-'thought it was very silly and trifling.'

'Oh!' exclaimed Miss Woodby, 'there is an inexpressible charm in the 'trifling chat of a pretty sensible fellow, 'when we know he submits to it only 'to please us women.'—'Truly,' said Miss Courteney, 'your sex is not ob-'liged to you for that compliment. Must 'a man then talk nonsense to be ac-'ceptable to us?'—'Lord! how grave 'you are, my dear,' said Miss Wood-by; 'why, don't you know that I am 'the veriest coquet in nature, and take 'an infinite pleasure in making a wise 'man look and talk like a fool?'

'A coquet, my dear!' interrupted Henrietta, surprized; 'no, surely.'—'Indeed but I am,' replied Miss Wood-by; 'and I verily think I should not be 'in the least concerned to see a hundred 'men dying of love for me.'—'In-'deed!' said Miss Courteney. 'Yes, 'indeed,' repeated the other; 'but why 'that stare of astonishment? are these 'notions so new to you?'—'Why, 'no,' hesitated Miss Courteney, whose astonishment arose from the contem-plation of the figure which uttered all this extravagance, 'I have somewhere 'met in my course of reading with 'such fantastical notions, but I cannot 'say that I ever thought I should hear 'them avowed by a young lady of your 'good sense.'—'Oh! your servant for 'that compliment,' returned Miss Woodby, bowing; 'but on the article 'of vanity we are all fools. But come, 'my dear, make your tea, and then re-'sume your story; for I die with im-'patience to hear it.'

'I wish you would excuse me,' said Henrietta, 'till I am got to Mrs. Egret's, 'for I shall not be easy till I am out of 'this house.'—'Why have you such a 'dislike to this house?' said Miss Wood-by;

by; 'I proteſt I think your landlady 'a mighty civil, obliging woman.'—'Well, I don't like her,' replied Henrietta; 'ſhe has let her firſt floor all on 'a ſudden to the gentleman we ſaw in 'the ſhop.'—'And how does that affect you?' interrupted Miſs Woodby.

Henrietta bluſhed at this queſtion; ſhe was not willing to own that ſhe thought there was ſome deſign in his coming, and expected her friend would have made that inference herſelf; but finding ſhe did not, ſhe endeavoured to divert her attention from the hint ſhe had dropped, by ſaying ſhe had ſet her heart upon going to Mrs. Egret's, and had told Mrs. Eccles that ſhe was to leave her today.

'That was very imprudently done of 'you,' ſaid Miſs Woodby, 'before 'you knew whether Mrs. Egret could 'accommodate you with lodgings; but 'own the truth now,' purſued ſhe, 'did 'you not put yourſelf into a flutter 'upon hearing the gentleman had taken 'lodgings here?'

'Why, I cannot help ſaying I was 'ſtartled at it,' replied Henrietta, 'and 'the more when I heard he was a man 'of quality; for ſurely theſe lodgings 'are much too mean for a perſon of that 'rank.'

'Is he a man of quality?' exclaimed Miſs Woodby: 'Oh! the dear creature! I proteſt I am quite in love with 'him now; I doat on a man of quality. 'And pray, why ſhould his coming 'fright you away? Ah! my dear,' ſaid ſhe, ſmiling archly, 'had I not reaſon for ſaying a moment ago, that on 'the article of vanity we are all fools? 'Now are you ready to imagine here is 'a plot between this young nobleman 'and Mrs. Eccles againſt your fair ſelf. 'Poor lady!' purſued ſhe, laughing, 'this preſumptuous knight will certainly 'carry you away.'

'You are in a gay humour to-day,' ſaid Miſs Courteney, bluſhing; 'but, 'raillery a-part, it imports me greatly 'not to be known: this lord, as Mrs. 'Eccles ſays he is, will no doubt have a 'great many perſons coming after him; 'I may be ſeen and diſcovered; and, if 'you knew what I have to dread in that 'caſe, I am ſure you would think it 'reaſonable for me to be deſirous of 'leaving this houſe.'

'You will be in more danger of a 'diſcovery at Mrs. Egret's,' ſaid Miſs Woodby; 'her houſe is much larger 'than this, and ſhe is very ſeldom without people of faſhion in it.'—'But I 'can keep in my chamber,' ſaid Henrietta. 'And what hinders you from 'doing ſo here?' ſaid Miſs Woodby. 'Ah! it is as I ſuſpected; you are certainly apprehenſive of being conveyed 'to ſome iſland in an immenſe lake.'

'But, my dear Miſs Woodby,' ſaid Henrietta, laughing, 'why, have you 'changed your mind about my going 'to Mrs. Egret's?'—'I have not 'changed my mind,' replied Miſs Woodby; 'I am ready to do what I 'promiſed, but it is my opinion that if 'Mrs. Egret cannot furniſh you with a 'lodging, you will be very ſafe here, 'and I will be with you as often as I 'can.'—'Ah, my dear,' ſaid Miſs Courteney, mimicking the tone ſhe had uſed to her; 'but come write a line to 'Mrs. Egret, to know if ſhe has a ſingle 'room to ſpare, and I ſhall be ſatisfied.'

Miſs Woodby immediately complied with her requeſt, and a porter was diſpatched to St. James's Street, who ſoon returned with a billet from Mrs. Egret to Miſs Woodby, expreſſing her concern that ſhe could not accommodate her friend.

'Well,' ſaid Henrietta, when ſhe heard this, 'I find I muſt be contented 'to ſtay here a few days longer; but 'remember I claim your promiſe to be 'with me as often as you can.'—'That 'you may depend upon,' ſaid Miſs Woodby; 'and now I claim your's to 'finiſh your hiſtory; I am impatient to 'hear how you came off with this 'doughty chaplain.'

CHAP. IV.

IN WHICH OUR HEROINE ENGAGES HERSELF IN A VERY UNEQUAL CONTEST.

'I Muſt confeſs,' ſaid Miſs Courteney, reſuming her narrative, 'that 'I had no inclination to engage in a 'religious diſpute with a man whoſe 'learning and abilities furniſhed him 'with ſo many advantages over me; 'therefore, whenever he gave the converſation that turn, I generally took 'refuge in ſilence, not being willing to

'hurt

'hurt a cauſe I had ſo much at heart, 'by defending it weakly.

'However, I was often drawn in to 'anſwer by ſome apparent abſurdity ad- 'vanced by him, which it ſeemed mighty 'eaſy to refute. On theſe occaſions 'Mr. Danvers would liſten to me with 'wonderful attention, obſerve the moſt 'minute exactneſs in his reply, as if 'what I had urged had indeed great 'force: nay, he would ſometimes ſeem 'a little preſſed by my arguments; pauſe 'for a few moments, as if he found it 'neceſſary to collect all his ſtrength 'againſt ſo potent an adverſary; and, 'after a well-turned compliment on my 'underſtanding, he would reſume the 'argument, in which he never failed to 'puzzle, though he could not convince 'me; but always concluded with a de- 'claration that I was too hard for him; 'and it was well he had the beſt ſide of 'the argument, for nothing but truth 'could ſtand againſt ſuch ſubtilty of rea- 'ſoning.

'Theſe praiſes always left me in a 'very good diſpoſition to renew the ſub- 'ject whenever an opportunity offered. 'I began to be extremely fond of diſ- 'puting with the chaplain; and, inſtead 'of ſhunning it, as I uſed to do, I even 'invited his oppoſition.

'I have heard it obſerved, that vani- 'ty cheats many a woman out of her ho- 'nour; I am ſure it was well nigh cheat- 'ing me out of my religion; for this 'Jeſuit, by his inſidious praiſes, had 'given me ſuch a confidence in my ta- 'lent of reaſoning, that I began to be- 'lieve, if he did not make a proſelyte of 'me, I ſhould certainly make one of 'him; and, in my eager purſuit of vic- 'tory, I ſometimes engaged myſelf be- 'yond my ſtrength, and received ſuch 'checks, that if my faith was not over- 'thrown, yet it was ſtrangely ſtaggered: 'but ſome diſguſt which I took to the 'manners of the chaplain preſerved me 'from the poiſon of his doctrine, and 'made me loſe all my reliſh for arguing 'with him.

'My aunt, who was certainly very 'deſirous of my converſion, was much 'pleaſed with her chaplain's zeal to for- 'ward ſo great a work; and, that ſhe 'might give no interruption to our diſ- 'courſe, ſhe would often leave us alone 'for ſeveral hours together.

'At ſuch times, the Jeſuit would be 'very laviſh of his compliments and 'praiſes; of which my perſon would 'even come in for a ſhare. He would 'gaze on my face till he loſt the chain 'of his diſcourſe, and, by his inatten- 'tion to what he was ſaying, gave me 'many advantages over him; and of- 'ten, while he was purſuing his argu- 'ment with great warmth, he would 'lay his hand on mine, hold it for ſeve- 'ral minutes together, and preſs it ſo 'violently, that I could hardly help 'crying out.

'All this, however, would not have 'ſtartled me; but one day, taking oc- 'caſion, upon ſomething I had ſaid, to 'break into an exclamation of ſurprize 'at my prodigious underſtanding, he 'kiſſed my hand in a kind of rapture; 'and having once taken this liberty, he 'repeated it ſeveral times, to my great 'confuſion and ſurprize.

'There are ſuſpicions, my dear, 'which, againſt perſons of a certain 'character, one dare not even avow to 'one's ſelf. I was ſhocked, yet would 'not venture to examine why; I could 'never endure to be alone with him, yet 'never aſked myſelf the reaſon; my 'eyes, as it were, mechanically avoid- 'ed his; his civilities were odious to me. 'If he enquired after my health, I 'anſwered him coldly, without know- 'ing I did ſo; and when he launched 'into any of his uſual praiſes, I was 'downright rude to him, yet ſcarce per- 'ceived it myſelf.

'I now ſo carefully ſhunned being 'alone with him, that notwithſtanding 'he ſought opportunities of engaging 'me in private, which heightened my 'diſguſt, yet he never could find any. 'This conduct, if he had any guilt in 'his heart, muſt certainly give him 'cauſe to think I had detected it; and 'indeed I ſoon found, by my aunt's 'altered behaviour, that he was endea- 'vouring to undermine me in her af- 'fection.

'The little peeviſhneſs I obſerved in 'her towards me, I imputed at firſt to 'her chagrin at my having diſappointed 'her wiſhes in not becoming a convert 'to that religion ſhe profeſſed; but I 'ſoon found that ſhe had been made to 'conceive ſtrange notions of me. She 'objected to the gaiety of my diſpoſition; 'ſhe did not like that crowd of lovers, 'as ſhe phraſed it, that followed me,

'and

'and were encouraged by my coquet 'airs, and the pleasure I shewed in be- 'ing admired.

'It is certain, that the report of the 'fortune my aunt designed for me, pro- 'cured me addresses from several men, 'whom as she did not approve, so neither 'did I encourage; having, in reality, 'none of that sort of vanity which is gra- 'tified by a great many pretenders of 'this kind, nor did I feel the least par- 'tiality to any one of them; so that I 'told her it would give me no uneasiness 'if she forbid their visits for the future, 'which, since I found they were dis- 'agreeable to her, I would have done 'myself, if I had thought it became me 'to take that liberty in her house. This 'declaration would not satisfy my aunt: 'she had further views; I must marry, 'and she must chuse a husband for me, 'without leaving me, in an affair that so 'nearly concerned my happiness, even 'a negative voice.

'I have no doubt but that the person 'she pitched upon was recommended to 'her by the chaplain; he was a Roman 'Catholick baronet, had a large estate, 'was not much above sixty years of age, 'his person just not horrible, and he was 'not quite a fool. This was the man 'whom my aunt proposed to me, or 'rather commanded me to accept; for 'he had modesty enough not to try to 'engage my affections, till he had se- 'cured her consent, and was admitted 'in form to make his addresses to me.

'My aunt indeed allowed that there 'was some disproportion in our years; 'but then he had a good estate, and I 'was wholly dependent upon her; his 'person, she acknowledged, was not 'very amiable, but he was a baronet, and 'could give me a title. "To be sure," 'she said, "he was not a man of bright "parts, but he would make a good set- "tlement on me;" and concluded with 'assuring me, that my chearful consent 'would greatly endear me to her, which 'I should find by the disposition she 'would make in her will.

'My aunt, having thus anticipated 'every objection I could make, and, in 'her opinion, fully answered them all, 'I thought it would be to no purpose to 'dispute with her on points already de- 'cided; I therefore contented myself 'with declaring, that I could not like 'Sir Isaac Darby (for that was his name;) 'that I should be miserable if I married 'him; that I was extremely happy in 'my present situation, and had no wish 'to change it.

'Lady Meadows, I perceived, was a 'little offended at this so positive a de- 'claration; but I had nothing for it 'but steadiness. "I expected," said 'she, "more compliance from that "sweetness I have been fond of sup- "posing in your temper; and from your "good sense, a greater attention to "your own interest." I assured her, 'that it was and ever should be my sin- 'cerest endeavour to avoid offending 'her; that I would admit no offer but 'such as she should approve; and that I 'would guard my heart against any pre- 'ference which was not authorised by 'her: more than this I told her was 'not in my power to promise, for 'no consideration of interest could pre- 'vail upon me to give my hand to a 'man whom it was impossible for me 'either to love or esteem.

'Finding she listened to me patiently, 'I urged every argument my imagina- 'tion could furnish me with, to prove 'to her that such an engagement, en- 'tered into upon pecuniary motives only, 'could not be happy, and might be 'very miserable. I begged she would 'not think of disposing of me in mar- 'riage, till I seemed less satisfied with 'my present happy lot; and that, by 'giving me no superior duties in dome- 'stick life to fulfil, she might entitle her- 'self to all my undivided cares, af- 'fection, and assiduity.

'My aunt seemed affected with what 'I said: she told me she had no inten- 'tion to force my inclination; that, 'loving me so well as she did, it was 'natural for her to wish to see me set- 'tled; that Sir Isaac Darby was a very 'advantageous offer; she recommended 'to me to consider well what I refused, 'and to conquer my unreasonable dis- 'like of him if possible.

"If it were possible, Madam," re- 'plied I, "your command would make "me attempt it, but——" "No "more buts now, Henrietta," inter- 'rupted my aunt; "Sir Isaac dines here "to-day; remember I expect you will "treat him civilly at least, since he has "so great a regard for you."

'I smiled, curtsied, and went out of 'the room where this long conversation 'had been held, for I heard the chap- 'lain's step in my aunt's dressing-room; 'and

'and this being the hour when he gene-
'rally joined us, I chose to avoid see-
'ing him then, for fear he should pre-
'vail upon her to exact something more
'than civility from me to the odious
'wretch, who had thus bartered for me
'without my consent.

'I did not appear in the dining-
'room till dinner was ready to be served;
'my antiquated lover approached with
'a janty air, and a sliding bow; and
'(O! don't you pity me, my dear) kissed
'my hand, as he led me to my seat.
'Nothing but the respect I owed my
'aunt could have hindered me from
'laughing at this ridiculous display of
'gallantry in the old man; for age has
'no claim to our reverence, if not ac-
'companied by those qualities from
'whence it derives it's worth. Wis-
'dom, gravity, experience, the triumph
'of reason over passions, prejudice, and
'folly; all these we expect to find in
'fulness of years, and these make it's
'wrinkles not only respectable but even
'lovely.

'In Sir Isaac Darby, age was con-
'temptible as well as unlovely; he
'wanted to be young, in spite of time;
'he talked and laughed aloud; he strut-
'ted about the room; he adjusted his
'bag, for he was dress up to five and
'twenty; he hummed a tune: I sat
'staring with astonishment at him.

'From what had passed between my
'aunt and I in the morning, I had no
'reason to imagine that Sir Isaac would
'be treated as a declared and authorised
'lover; but some time after dinner was
'over, Mr. Danvers withdrew, and my
'aunt, upon some trifling pretence, fol-
'lowing him, I was left alone with the
'old baronet. I would instantly have
'quitted the room; but, remembering
'that my aunt had required civility of
'me at least, I resolved not to affront
'him, by leaving him to himself; and
'since I was obliged to stay, I would
'draw some amusement from the ridi-
'culous scene before me.

'I know not whether it was from
'any particular archness in my looks
'just then, (for I had composed my
'countenance to a kind of forced gra-
'vity) or whether the old man was at a
'loss in what manner he should form
'his address; but it is certain, that all
'his confidence seemed now, for the first
'time, to forsake him, and he sat silent
'during several minutes, stealing a
'glance at me every now and then:
'while I, with a formal air, played my
'fan, and increased his confusion by
'my silence. At length he quitted his
'own chair for that which my aunt had
'sat in, and which was next me; and
'drawing it still nearer to me, he made
'a motion to take my hand, which I
'withdrew as hastily as if a snake had
'touched it.

'This action a little disconcerted him;
'but taking courage again, after a pre-
'luding hem, he began—"Charming
"Miss Courteney, I don't doubt but
"Lady Meadows has informed you of
"the violence of my——" Here an
'unlucky cough interrupted his speech,
'and held him so long, that he grew
'black in the face; his endeavours to
'suppress it having, as I believe, almost
'choaked him. I rose up in a seeming
'fright, as if I had designed to call for
'assistance; but finding his cough had
'ceased, I sat down again at a greater
'distance than before.

"I fancy the town air does not agree
"with you, Sir," said I; "it is cer-
"tainly very bad for asthmatical dis-
"orders."

"Oh, Madam!" said he, "this is
"no asthma. I got a slight cold the
"other night at Spring Gardens; for
"we staid very late, and the ground
"was damp: but I came off better than
"any of my companions, two or three
"of whom are still laid up with colds.
"But tell me, dear Miss Courteney,
"did you receive favourably the decla-
"ration your aunt made in my name?
"May I hope, or am I doomed to de-
"spair?" whined out the superannuated
'inamorato, with an hideous ogle,
'which he designed for a languish.

"Oh, good Sir," replied I, excessively
'shocked at his folly, "these Arcadian
"strains do not become your wisdom
"and gravity. My aunt did mention
"your proposals to me, but I cannot
"accept them, I have no inclination to
"change my condition."

"How admirably this pretty serious-
"ness sits on those sweet features!"
'said the wretch, looking confidently at
'me, without being in the least mor-
'tified with my rebuke. "But, my
"dear Miss Courtency, you must change
"your mind—indeed you must—and
"your condition too, my fair one."

" Perhaps I may, Sir," said I.

" Oh, that charming perhaps!" said he, " it restores me to life."

' Was there ever any thing so provoking, my dear? I protest I could hardly ' help abusing the ridiculous old man.

" I really think, Sir," said I, looking at him with infinite contempt, " that my seriousness would become " your age, as well as my youth; but," ' pursued I, rising, " to put an end to " all your hopes, be pleased to know, " that I am determined never to give " my hand till I can give my heart with " it; for I have no notion of being perjured at the altar, and of vowing to " love, honour, and obey, when it is " impossible for me to do either."

' I went out of the room when I had ' said these words, leaving the baronet ' to mumble the ends of his fingers with ' his gums; for he affected to bite his ' nails, as some persons who really have ' teeth do, when they are angry.

' I met my aunt as I was going to my ' own chamber. " What, Henrietta!" ' said she, " have you left Sir Isaac " alone? I suppose you have treated " him rudely; but come, you must re" turn with me."—" I will, if you in" sist upon it, Madam," said I, " but " I had much rather be excused."—" Indeed!" said my aunt, looking a little ' angrily on me, " and with that grave " face too!—but I shall not insist upon " it, Miss, and so you may go up to " your own room, if you please."

' Although I was very glad to be at ' liberty to retire, yet my aunt's per' mission was given in such a manner ' that I saw she was offended with me ' for desiring it. I had experienced the ' obstinacy of her temper on several oc' casions; and I was convinced that if she ' set her heart upon marrying me to the ' baronet, she would use her utmost en' deavours to carry her point, and the ' loss of her favour might probably be ' the consequence of her disappoint' ment.

CHAP. V.

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF SOME DIFFICULTIES OUR HEROINE WAS INVOLVED IN, ARISING FROM AN OLD EXPLODED NOTION, THAT INTEREST OUGHT NOT TO BE THE SOLE CONSIDERATION IN MARRIAGE.

' FULL of these melancholy reflec' tions, I resolved to write to ' Mr. Damer, acquaint him with what ' had passed, and intreat his advice in ' the uneasy and perplexed state of my ' mind. Not that I had the least inten' tion of being governed by it, if he re' commended to me compliance with ' my aunt's commands in favour of the ' baronet; but this I was well assured, ' from his good sense and natural rec' titude of mind, he would not do, since ' it could never be supposed that such a ' man could be my choice; but I was ' willing to stand clear in his opinion, ' and pay him the deference that was ' due to the quality of guardian, which ' he had so kindly assumed.

' I had been writing near two hours, ' for I had given him a circumstantial ' detail of every thing that had passed ' with regard to the baronet, whose cha' racter I treated with great contempt; ' but, what was worse, my aunt herself ' did not escape some satirical strokes of ' my pen for her ready concurrence with ' the old man's proposals; and although ' I mentioned her (as it was my duty) ' with all imaginable love and respect, ' yet I could not help humorously rally' ing upon some of her notions, which ' were really odd enough, and I placed ' them in the most glaring light.

' The prodigious length of my letter ' first gave me notice that I had been a ' long time thus employed; and, look' ing at my watch, I found it was past ' our usual hour for tea, and wondered ' that I had not been summoned down ' stairs. I therefore made haste to con' clude my letter, that I might send it ' to the post, when my aunt unfortu' nately entered the room. I started up ' from my chair when I saw her; and, ' hastily crushing the letter all in my ' hand, I put it into my pocket, not ' without betraying some signs of con' fusion.

" So, Henrietta," said my aunt, " have I caught you?"—" Caught me! " Madam," said I, considering whether ' she might not have been looking over ' my shoulder while I was writing so ' saucily about her; for guilt, like love, ' makes every thing seem possible that ' we fear. " Yes," said she, " have

" you

" you not been writing? Nay, don't " deny it," purſued ſhe, for I heſitated, ' and knew not what to ſay, leſt ſhe ' ſhould deſire to ſee my letter; " it is " no wonder that poor Sir Iſaac Darby " was rejected with ſo much ſcorn, when " there is a favoured lover with whom " you correſpond privately."

" Bleſs me, Madam," cried I, " who " has told you ſo? I correſpond pri- " vately with a favoured lover! This " is ſome cruel calumny invented by an " enemy, to deprive me of your good " opinion."—" Well," ſaid my aunt, " ſhew me the letter you conveyed ſo " haſtily into your pocket upon my ap- " pearance, and then I ſhall know what " to think."

" You never, Madam," replied I, " uſed to deſire to ſee my letters; nor " would you now, but in conſequence " of ſome ſuſpicion very unfavourable " to me."—" That ſuſpicion," inter- ' rupted my aunt, " whatever it is, will " be greatly ſtrengthened by your re- " fuſing to ſhew me what you have been " writing."

" Surely, Madam," replied I, " that " is not juſt; I may have been writing " to Mr. Damer, or to my brother."— " To your brother," ſaid my aunt, " I am certain you was not writing, be- " cauſe you have not heard from him " for ſeveral months, and don't know " how to direct to him;" which indeed ' was but too true. " It is poſſible that " you were writing to Mr. Damer; but " why refuſe to ſhew me your letter? " you can have no tranſactions with " him that I ought not to be acquainted " with: but I am perſuaded that letter " was not deſigned for Mr. Damer; " and there needs no more to convince " me that you are carrying on a private, " and therefore an improper correſpon- " dence, than your thus obſtinately re- " fuſing to ſhew it me."

' My aunt had reaſon for what ſhe ' ſaid: nothing was more eaſy, if I was ' really innocent, than to ſhew her the ' letter, which would remove her ſuſpi- ' cions; but this, as I had managed that ' fatal letter, it was impoſſible for me to ' do. By not ſhewing it, I confirmed ' thoſe ſuſpicions ſhe had ſo unjuſtly ' conceived, which might indeed have ' diſagreeable conſequences; but, by ' ſhewing it, I was ſure to incur her re- ' ſentment for the liberties I had taken ' with her.

' How did I that moment inwardly ' regret my vanity, which had ſuffered ' me to rally the faults of a perſon on ' whom I ſo abſolutely depended, merely ' to diſplay my wit! I was ſo vexed at ' the dilemma to which I had reduced ' myſelf, that I burſt into tears.

" Oh! I ſee how it is," ſaid my aunt; " keep your letter, Henrietta, I am con- " vinced ſufficiently." She hurried out ' of my chamber at theſe words. Shock- ' ed to the ſoul at having thus incurred ' the imputation of entertaining a ſecret ' lover, I went after her, reſolving in ' that firſt emotion to ſhew her the letter, ' and rather be thought ungrateful to ' her, than guilty of an imprudence ſo ' diſadvantageous to my character; but ' ſhe was already at the bottom of the ' ſtairs, and I had time to make new ' reflections which prevented my former ' purpoſe.

' I conſidered, that ſince there was no ' foundation for her fears of my liſtening ' to a private addreſs, I might eaſily ' find means to undeceive her, and ' juſtify myſelf; but if I ſhewed her a ' letter, in which ſhe was mentioned ' with ſo great freedom, I might poſſibly ' never be able to remove thoſe ill im- ' preſſions of me which ſhe would doubt- ' leſs receive, and I ſhould be all my ' life branded for ingratitude.

' I was ſo terrified at this thought, ' that I reſolved to put it out of my ' power to expoſe myſelf to ſuch a mis- ' fortune, by deſtroying the fatal letter, ' which I did with a precipitation that ' left no time for ſecond thoughts. ' When this was over, I expected to ' have found myſelf more calm and eaſy, ' but it was quite otherwiſe. I had ' given foundation to believe that I was ' engaged in a love-intrigue; for ſurely ' all clandeſtine addreſſes may be termed ' ſo, ſince there is too much myſtery, ' contrivance, and little arts, neceſſary ' to them, not to give great pain to a ' delicate mind. I burſt into tears at ' the reflection. My aunt's woman, ' who had a very tender regard for me, ' came into my chamber, and, finding ' me ſo diſordered, begged to know ' what had happened.

' I related every thing that had paſſed ' between my aunt and I, but did not ' own to all the little freedoms I had ' taken with her in my letter; yet ſaid ' enough to convince her, that I could ' not well ſhow it to my aunt.

'Mrs. White, for that was her name, 'was very much concerned for my situ-'ation: she told me, that her lady and 'Mr. Danvers were in close conference. "It is certainly he," said she, "who "has infused these suspicions into my "lady, which, by this unfortunate cir-"cumstance of the letter, are now con-"firmed." She gave me such plain hints 'of the chaplain's selfish dispositions 'and designs, that it seemed highly pro-'bable he would spare no artifices to 'lessen my aunt's affection for me; for, 'since he had failed in making me a 'convert, which perhaps might have 'answered other views, he was desirous 'of keeping my aunt entirely to himself, 'and so manage her conscience, which 'he had the direction of, as that holy 'mother-church and he might divide 'her spoils.

'All this considered, my condition 'seemed so dangerous, that I begged 'Mrs. White to send a porter with a 'message from me to Mr. Damer, de-'siring to see him; for I resolved to re-'gulate my conduct on this occasion 'wholly by his advice. She left me to 'do what I had desired her; and I re-'mained alone in my chamber till nine 'o'clock, at which time I was summoned 'to supper.

'I found only my aunt and Mr. 'Danvers: I was a little confused; for 'knowing what suspicions I laboured 'under in my aunt's mind, I thought I 'had the air of a guilty person, and I 'felt that I blushed, and blushed the 'more for that reason.

'My aunt looked very coldly upon 'me; Mr. Danvers had the appearance 'of one that was very much concerned 'that all was not well between us. My 'aunt scarce spoke three words during 'supper; it was not my part surely to 'talk much; and Mr. Danvers accom-'modated himself to the present temper 'of my aunt; so that this was a very 'gloomy meal.

'When the cloth was removed, I 'was going to withdraw, for it seemed 'as if my presence was a restraint upon 'my aunt; but I considered that such 'a step, being unusual, would imply a 'consciousness of something wrong in 'me, and that being innocent, it was 'my part to seek an explanation. I 'therefore addressed myself to my aunt, 'and begged she would give me an op-'portunity of clearing myself, by telling 'me who had poisoned her mind with 'suspicions to my prejudice.

'The chaplain was about to leave the 'room upon my entering on this sub-'ject. "There is no necessity, Sir," 'said I, "for your retiring; I dare say "the cause of my aunt's displeasure "against me is no secret to you. My "aunt has been told that I receive ad-"dresses from some man in private, and "that I correspond with him: I declare "this to be absolutely false; and I beg "to know from whom you had your "information, Madam," said I, again 'directing myself to her, "that I may "refute this calumny: I am very "confident the person who has thus "maliciously injured me, will not dare "to maintain the falsehood to my face."

'Whether the chaplain thought this 'was meant for him, I know not; but 'although he had continued standing, 'as if he intended to leave us to our-'selves, yet I had no sooner uttered these 'last words than he resumed his seat 'immediately, as if he would shew me 'he was not in the least affected by 'them; but I observed that he fixed his 'eyes upon my aunt, and expected her 'answer with some emotion.

"Before I comply with your con-"dition," said my aunt, "do you, "Henrietta, agree to mine; let me see "that letter you wrote to-day." I 'looked at the chaplain; I saw an altera-'tion in his countenance, he was evi-'dently more composed. "Oh!" thought 'I, sighing, "how great would my "triumph be, if I had this letter to shew, "and could shew it without fear!"

"You hesitate, Henrietta," pursued 'my aunt; "why, if that letter was not "to a lover, why do you refuse to pro-"duce it?"—"I declare, Madam," 'said I, "upon my word and honour, "that the letter was to Mr. Damer."—"Well, let me see it," said my aunt, "and I shall be satisfied."—"I can-"not shew it to you, Madam," replied 'I, in a faultering accent, for I dreaded 'the inference that would be drawn 'from what I was going to confess; "I have torn it."—"Well," said my 'aunt, with a calmness that cost her some 'pains to maintain, "and why did you "tear it? it was not written to be torn, "that is certain. But I will answer "for you, niece, you tore it that I might

"not

" not see it; and why might not I see " it if it was to Mr. Damer?"—"Again " I protest," said I, " that it was to " him; but I did not chuse to let you " see it; it was a long letter, full of im- " pertinencies: you would have thought " I was very free in my observations " on some particular persons, more free " than became me perhaps. You might " have been offended, and I tore it to " prevent your seeing it."

' My aunt looked down, paused, and ' seemed not wholly dissatisfied with my ' manner of accounting for the reluctance ' I shewed to deliver my letter to her; ' but before she would declare herself, it ' was necessary she should consult her ' oracle, and that could not be done be- ' fore me. She therefore put an end to ' the conversation, by ringing the bell ' for her woman. I attended her to her ' chamber, at the door of which she bade ' me good night, telling me, she would ' talk further with me in the morning.

' I endeavoured to make Mrs. White ' comprehend, by a look I gave her un- ' observed, that I wished to speak to ' her; and accordingly she came to me, ' after my aunt was in bed, and delivered ' the answer the porter had brought from ' Mr. Damer. He was out of town, but ' expected back in a week or two, was ' what the servants told him.

' Mrs. White repeated her offers of ' service to me, but dropped some ex- ' pressions which shewed she would be ' glad to be assured that I really had no ' secret engagement which might justify ' my aunt's concern.

' These doubts, hinted with great re- ' spect, were so far from being resented ' by me, that I conceived the better opi- ' nion of her discretion, and confided ' absolutely in her sincerity. I made ' her quite easy with regard to the sub- ' ject of her fears; and she repaid this ' condescension with the kindest assur- ' ances of attachment to me and care ' of my interests.

' I went to bed, full of hope that I ' had in part removed my aunt's suspi- ' cions; and relying on my innocence, ' I was persuaded I should soon restore ' myself to her good opinion; but in- ' nocence is not always a security to it's ' possessor, because malice attains it's ' ends by arts, which a good mind can- ' not conceive, and therefore is unable ' to guard against.

' Mrs. White informed me in a whis- ' per, as I was going into my aunt's ' dressing-room next morning, where ' we always breakfasted, that her lady ' and the chaplain had been talking toge- ' ther for half an hour. I drew no fa- ' vourable omen from this intelligence, ' nor from my aunt's looks, which ' were very cold and constrained.

' When breakfast was over, and Mr. ' Danvers had withdrawn, I expected ' she would enter into some conversation ' with me on the subject of the letter; ' but finding she talked of indifferent ' things, I took occasion to mention it ' myself, and begged to know if she had ' any doubts still remaining in her mind.

" Surely," replied my aunt, " you " think I am a person that can be very " easily imposed upon."—" Then you " are resolved, Madam," said I, with ' some peevishness, (for indeed I was hor- ' ridly vexed to find her so strongly pre- ' judiced) " to believe I encourage a " clandestine address, notwithstanding " every appearance to the contrary."

" No indeed," interrupted my aunt, " I am not so unreasonable, Miss; it is " because there are very strong appear- " ances against you, that I am forced " to believe what you would not have " me—That letter, Henrietta—But no " more on this subject at present: I am " going to my house near Windsor " Forest to-morrow; we shall there have " leisure enough to talk over this affair, " and there I shall open my mind freely " to you." I curtsied, and was silent.

' My aunt took me with her to pay ' some morning visits, and seemed to be ' in very good humour; but her words, ' that she would open her mind freely to ' me at Windsor, gave me a great deal ' of anxiety. I did not doubt but I was ' to be pressed again on the subject of Sir ' Isaac Darby, and I was prepared for ' an obstinate resistance; but I was ap- ' prehensive that this resistance to my ' aunt's will, meeting with the unac- ' countable suspicions she had entertain- ' ed, would infallibly ruin me with her.

" O my brother!" thought I, " why " are you not here to countenance and " protect me? or why have you so long " neglected me, as to leave me in sus- " pence whether I have a brother or not!"

' This thought, and several others no ' less painful, spread an air of pensive- ' ness and melancholy on my counte- ' nance, which my aunt, as I perceived, ' by some hints that dropped from her,

' inter-

'interpreted to my disadvantage. In 'short, my dear, she imputed my pen 'siveness to the concern I was under at 'leaving town, as I could not expect to 'have many opportunities of seeing at 'Windsor this lover who had possession 'of my heart.

'You cannot imagine, Miss Woodby, 'how much I suffered in being obliged 'to restrain my indignation at being 'thus treated; to have a phantom of a 'lover conjured up to teaze me with, 'and to combat suspicions which had not 'the least foundation but in prejudice 'and caprice, against which plain truth 'and reason were very unequal arms: 'for how should reason remove what 'would never have been admitted, if 'reason had not been first set aside? No-'thing was ever more improbable than 'that I should have a secret lover: I 'never went any where without my 'aunt; her visiters were mine; I could 'see nobody without her knowledge: 'how was this engagement formed? 'But her chaplain had doubtless assured 'her, that I had a secret engagement, 'and she piously believed him, in con-'tradiction to her own judgment: this 'was one of those cases that required an 'implicit faith; and in matters of faith, 'you know, Roman Catholicks are not 'permitted to exercise their reason.

'We set out next morning for Windsor: 'the chaplain and my aunt's woman 'being in the coach, the conversation 'was wholly upon indifferent things. 'After dinner was over, my aunt took 'me into her closet, and entered into a 'long discourse, which it would tire you 'to repeat—but the substance of it was 'my unhappy situation when she took 'me out of the hands of Lady Man-'ning; her tenderness for me; the great 'things she designed to do for me, no-'thing less than making me her sole heir; 'the folly of marrying for love, exem-'plified in my father's marriage; her 'fears that I was going to throw myself 'away on some young fop, who would 'make me miserable; Sir Isaac Darby's 'generous passion for me, his great 'estate, the handsome settlements he 'proposed to make; and, lastly, the plea-'sure I would give her, by suiting in 'this case my inclinations to my in-'terest.

'To all this I answered very parti-'cularly: I acknowledged she had shewn 'a parental tenderness for me, and I had 'paid her, and ever would pay her, 'said, the duty and obedience due from 'a child to a parent; that in the article 'of marriage, my natural parents would 'certainly have allowed me a negative 'voice, which was all I claimed now, 'since I was absolutely resolved not only 'never to marry without her consent, 'but not to admit of any address which 'she disapproved. I begged her never 'to propose Sir Isaac Darby to me again, 'because my heart wholly rejected him; 'though at the same time I protested (as 'I might well do) that my affections 'were entirely disengaged.

"All your asseverations," replied my 'aunt, who had listened to me with 'many signs of impatience, "signify "nothing without you marry Sir Isaac "Darby; and by that only shall I be "convinced that your head does not "run upon some wild showy fellow, "who will make your heart ake.

"Here," continued she, "is a ba-"ronet of an ancient family, a large "estate, of good morals, not disagree-"able in his person—but what is person "in a man, who loves you, who will "make you a large jointure, who gives "you a title, place, equipage, all that a "prudent sensible woman can desire, "and you refuse him? Grant that he "is older than you, he has the more "wisdom." (O my dear, how difficult 'it was for me to forbear laughing here.) "But you are not in love with him—let "me tell you, Henrietta, that is not a "plea for a young woman of delicacy. "What, is it not possible for you to "make a good wife to an honest gen-"tleman, without bringing with you "all that romantick passion which forces "girls to jump out of windows to get "to their fellows! and, for the sake of "a man who possibly a few weeks be-"fore was an absolute stranger to them, "break through every tie of natural af-"fection, and, to be a wife, be con-"tented to be neither daughter, sister, "nor niece?"

'I was going to speak. My aunt in 'a peremptory manner laid her hand on 'my mouth. "I will not hear a word "more," said she, "on this subject; "if you refuse to give your hand to Sir "Isaac, I know what I am to think. "I allow you two days to consider of "it. Hitherto I have treated you as my "own child; if you comply, you shall "find me a mother; if not, I am only

"your

" your aunt; and you know how ſome " who ſtand in that degree of relation " to you behave." This was pretty ' plain, my dear; I was ſo ſhocked that ' I ſuffered my aunt to go out of the ' cloſet without making any anſwer; ' and retired to my own chamber to weep ' in freedom.

CHAP. VI.

IN WHICH OUR HEROINE IS VERY REASONABLY ALARMED.

' IT was indeed true that my father's ' family took no notice of me, not- ' withſtanding the applications that had ' been made to them; and when my ' aunt Meadows introduced me at my ' uncle's the Earl of ——, I was re- ' ceived ſo coldly by him and his lady, ' that I inly reſolved never to expoſe ' myſelf to ſuch a mortification again; ' and my aunt entered ſo far into my ' juſt reſentment, as never to preſs me ' to make them a ſecond viſit.

' My brother was abroad; if living, ' he neglected me; and perhaps I had ' no brother; for how elſe could I ac- ' count for ſo long a ſilence in one who ' ſeemed to have ſuch tender affections? ' I had no reſource but in Mr. Damer's ' friendſhip, and he was at this time un- ' luckily at too great a diſtance to be ' of any uſe to me. I ſaw plainly that ' I muſt either accept Sir Iſaac Darby, ' or be thrown back into my former in- ' digence and dependence. Dreadful ' alternative! But, the man conſidered, ' was there room to pauſe long?

' My imagination ſuggeſted to me ' every poſſible ill conſequence of the loſs ' of my aunt's favour; but, weighed ' againſt the miſery of ſuch a marriage, ' they all ſeemed light. Yet, would you ' think it, my dear, amidſt the many ' real evils I had reaſon to apprehend ' by diſobliging my aunt, one trifling ' circumſtance dwelt ſtrongeſt upon my ' mind, and that was the occaſion of ' triumph I ſhould give to Lady Man- ' ning, who would exult over my fallen ' expectations and return to indigence? ' I was aſhamed of my own weakneſs ' when I found this thought capable of ' giving me ſo much pain; and in the ' contemplation of greater misfortunes ' which were likely to be my lot, I ' ſought to blunt my ſenſe of theſe leſſer ' ones, which were the neceſſary conſe- ' quences of them.

' Towards evening Mrs. White threw ' herſelf in my way, as I was walking ' penſive in the garden. She told me, ' that my aunt was full of hopes that I ' would comply; that Sir Iſaac was to ' be invited the next day; and that it ' was expected the generoſity of his pro- ' poſals with regard to ſettlements, the ' rich preſents of jewels which he would ' offer, and his reſolution to agree to ' every thing I deſired, would make ' ſuch an impreſſion on my mind, as to ' induce me to give a free and willing ' conſent. Mrs. White added, that ' ſince my aunt was ſo determined upon ' concluding this match, ſhe wiſhed I ' could conquer my averſion to it; for ' ſhe feared that my abſolute refuſal ' would ſo irritate her, that ſhe might ' be eaſily perſuaded to take ſome vio- ' lent reſolution againſt me; " And there " is one," ſaid ſhe, " who will ſpare no " pains to bring that to paſs."

' I replied, that nothing which could ' befal me from the loſs of my aunt's ' favour, was to be dreaded ſo much as ' being the wife of Sir Iſaac Darby, and ' that my reſolution was fixed. Mrs. ' White ſighed, ſhrugged her ſhoulders, ' and haſtened from me for fear of be- ' ing obſerved, ſeeming, as I thought, ' to believe my caſe deſperate.

' When ſhe was gone, I conſidered, ' that if I accepted of the two days my ' aunt had given me to come to a reſo- ' lution, I ſhould be expoſed during ' that time to the odious courtſhip of Sir ' Iſaac, whoſe preſence was, it ſeems, ' judged neceſſary to influence me: I ' therefore determined to declare myſelf ' immediately, and plunge at once into ' the diſtreſſes that awaited me.

' I left the garden inſtantly, and went ' in ſearch of my aunt. As ſoon as I en- ' tered the room where ſhe was, ſhe laid ' down a book ſhe had been reading, ' and looked earneſtly at me, ſeeming, ' by my countenance, on which I be- ' lieve was impreſſed the agitation of ' my mind, to expect ſomething extra- ' ordinary.

" You have indulged me, Madam," ' ſaid I, " with two days to conſider " of your propoſal with regard to Sir " Iſaac Darby; but ſo long a time is " not neceſſary: were any thing leſs at

" ſtake

" ſtake than the future happineſs of my " life, you ſhould find me incapable of " oppoſing your will; but in this caſe " it is not poſſible for me to obey you. " Judge of my averſion to that man, " when I proteſt to you, that if death or " his hand was an alternative that I muſt " chuſe, I would without heſitation pre- " fer death as the leſſer hardſhip."

' This determined ſpeech ſeemed to ' ſurpriſe my aunt, though I think ſhe ' had no reaſon to expect I could ever ' be prevailed upon to marry Sir Iſaac.

" You are an undone girl," ſaid ſhe, ' after a pauſe of near three minutes; " I believe your father's folly is here- " ditary to you. I have done my duty. " Your obſtinacy be upon your own " head."

' I confeſs I was greatly affected with ' her calm reſentment, ſo likely to be ' laſting: I burſt into tears; ſhe went ' out of the room, I followed her into ' another, where Mr. Danvers was ſit- ' ting. As ſoon as I perceived him, I ' haſtily withdrew, for I was not will- ' ing to be ſeen by him in that ſtate of ' dejection. I retired to my own room, ' and there, after I had relieved my mind ' by another flood of tears, I endea- ' voured to ſoften my own apprehenſions ' of what might be the effects of having ' diſobliged the only relation who would ' own me, and collected all my forti- ' tude to enable me to bear the worſt ' that could happen. But that worſt, ' my dear, proved ſo terrible to my ' frighted imagination, that, to avoid it, ' I have taken a very imprudent and ' dangerous ſtep; and whither it will ' lead me, Heaven knows, for my heart ' forebodes ſome fatal conſequence from ' it.'

' Lord bleſs me!' ſaid Miſs Woodby, ' after eſcaping ſuch an odious huſband ' as Sir Iſaac, was any thing worſe to be ' feared!'

' Ah!' cried Miſs Courteney, ' but ' it was not certain whether I ſhould ' eſcape him; for if my aunt's ſcheme ' had taken place, I had every thing to ' fear.'—' What could your aunt's ' ſcheme be?' ſaid Miſs Woodby, im- patiently. ' Mr. Danvers's rather,' ſaid Miſs Courteney; ' and it's being his, ' made it more formidable.'

' My aunt ſeemed ſo eaſy and chear- ' ful at ſupper, and ſpoke to me ſo ' kindly, that all my gloomy appre- ' henſions vaniſhed, and I was happy in ' the thought that I ſhould preſerve her ' favour without becoming the wife of ' Sir Iſaac Darby; but I was ſoon un- ' deceived. Mrs. White tapped at my ' door, after ſhe had put my aunt to ' bed; I let her in, and told her, in a ' rapture of joy, how favourably my ' aunt ſeemed diſpoſed, and that I ſhould ' no longer be perſecuted about the odi- ous baronet. " O Miſs!" ſaid ſhe, " I am afraid this calm foretels a ſtorm." —" A ſtorm!" repeated I, " what do " you mean?"

" I always dreaded," ſaid ſhe, " that " Mr. Danvers would uſe his power " with my lady to your diſadvantage; " but who could have imagined that he " would prevail upon her to ſend you to " France, and lock you up in a nun- " nery?"

" How!" exclaimed I, almoſt breath- ' leſs with terror and ſurpriſe: " Con- " fine me in a nunnery! Is it poſſible? " How came you to know this?"

" By the ſtrangeſt chance in the " world," replied Mrs. White. " I " am not uſed to liſten, I ſcorn it; but " ſome words that fell from the chap- " lain, alarmed me on your account, " and I reſolved, if poſſible, to know " what he was driving at. This even- " ing," purſued ſhe, " I went to my " lady, to take her directions about ſome " laces I was making up for her. I " found the chaplain with her: they " ſeemed to be in deep diſcourſe; and " my lady, as if angry at being inter- " rupted, bid me, in a haſty manner, " come to her another time. I went " away immediately; and, juſt as I ſhut " the door, I heard the chaplain ſay, " Depend upon it, Madam, there is no " other way to preſerve her from ruin." —" Certainly," thought I to myſelf, " this muſt concern Miſs Courteney; I " put my ear to the key-hole, and heard " my lady anſwer, " But ſhall I not " be called a tyrant, for ſending my " niece to a convent, contrary to her " inclinations?"

" The chaplain made a long ſpeech, " which I could not diſtinctly hear; " but he told her ſhe muſt make a ſacri- " fice of ſuch idle cenſures to God; " that it was her duty to endeavour to " ſave a ſoul; that you were in a ſtate " of perdition; and oh, my dear Miſs! " but that I cannot believe, he aſſured " her you would throw yourſelf away " upon the idle fellow (thoſe were his " words)

" words) that you were in love with, " if not prevented by bolts and bars.

" In the end my lady seemed determined, and they consulted together " about the means they should use to " entrap you into a convent. My lady " proposed making a tour to Paris, by " way of amusement, to take you with " her, and leave you in some monastery. " Mr. Danvers, I found, objected to " that; he desired she would leave the " affair wholly to his management, and " said he would think of some expedient " that would be less troublesome to her. " I did not stay to hear any more; for I " was apprehensive of some of the servants coming that way, and discovering me at so mean a trick as listening."

" Good God!" cried I, " what shall " I do? What shall I do?" repeated I passionately, in the anguish of my mind. " My guardian is not in town! " to whom shall I apply for advice and " assistance in this extremity! I may be " hurried away to this horrid confine- " ment when I least expect it."

" That is impossible," said Mrs. White; " forewarned forearmed, as " the saying is. Since you know what " is intended against you, you must be " upon your guard; you cannot be carried away against your will."

' Mrs. White did not appear to me ' to have a very just sense of the danger ' I was exposed to; for what will not ' bigotry attempt! I was glad, therefore, when she left me to my own reflections; which she did, after begging ' me to be composed, and not to discover ' the manner in which I came by the intelligence she had given me.

' The latter part of her injunction I ' faithfully promised to perform; but ' oh! my dear Miss Woodby, how was ' it possible for me to be composed amidst ' such dreadful apprehensions? To be ' locked up in a gloomy monastery, perhaps for ever, exposed to the persecutions of superstitious zeal! but this was ' not the worst of my fears. To be ' consigned over, perhaps, to the care of ' a wolf in sheep's cloathing, who had ' already shocked my delicacy with freedoms, that, proceeding from such a ' man, in such a character, might well ' awaken the most frightful suspicions.'

' Truly,' said Miss Woodby, ' that ' seemed to be the worst part of your ' danger; for I don't like this Jesuit at ' all; every thing may be dreaded from ' a hypocrite: but, as to the being shut ' up in a convent, there is no great matter in it. Such beauty as yours ' would have soon engaged some adventurous knight in your cause, who ' would have scaled the walls to have ' delivered you. Oh, what a charming adventure! I protest I would submit to a few months confinement in ' such a place, for the pleasure of being ' delivered from it in so gallant a manner.'

' Sure you are not in earnest,' said Henrietta. ' Indeed but I am,' replied Miss Woodby. ' Well,' resumed Miss Courteney, ' you have very whimsical ' notions; but I assure you none of these ' entered into my head: the loss of liberty seemed to me so frightful a misfortune, that I was almost distracted ' with the idea of it.

' The first thought that occurred to ' me, and which indeed was the most ' natural, was to prevent my aunt from ' carrying her designs into execution, ' by leaving her. I might well imagine ' she would use violence to detain me, ' if I attempted it openly; therefore it ' was necessary to steal myself away, and ' this has the air of an adventure you ' must own; but as I had no confidant ' in this design, no gallant youth to assist ' me in my escape, and did not even ' make use of a ladder of ropes, or endanger breaking my neck, I am afraid ' this adventure is not in a taste high ' enough for you.'

' Oh, you are rallying me!' said Miss Woodby; ' but I long to know how ' you escaped. No confidant! how could ' you manage so arduous an undertaking ' by yourself?'

' With great ease, I assure you,' said Miss Courteney; ' and I don't think ' you will allow it to be an escape, when ' I tell you I walked peaceably out of ' a door, not without some trepidation ' however, which arose less from the ' fear of a pursuit, than the consciousness that I was taking a step which ' every young woman of delicacy will ' if possible avoid.

' As I have already told you, I instantly resolved upon leaving my aunt; ' but where should I seek an asylum? ' Mr. Damer, whose protection I might ' have requested with honour, was not ' in town; my brother was abroad; ' none of my father's relations would

'receive me; I had no acquaintances 'but such as were my aunt's, to whom 'any application would have been very 'improper, as I should have found 'very strong prejudices to combat with, 'it being a received maxim among per-'sons of a certain age, that young peo-'ple are always in the wrong; besides, 'one seldom meets with any one who has 'not that littleness of soul which is mis-'taken for prudence, and teaches that 'it is not safe to meddle with other peo-'ple's affairs; which narrow notion pre-'vents many a good office, many a kind 'interposition: so that we seem to live 'only for ourselves.

'My perplexed mind could suggest 'no better expedient to me, than to 'seize the first opportunity that offered 'to go to London,' and there conceal 'myself in a private lodging till Mr. 'Damer's return, who I doubted not 'would take me under his protection. 'Before I had fixed upon this resolution, 'great part of the night was wasted; so 'that I lay later than usual the next 'morning. When I went down to 'breakfast, I found my aunt dressed, 'and her coach ordered. She took 'notice that my eyes looked heavy; I 'told her I had a violent head-ach, 'which indeed was true: she said it 'was a cold, and bid me keep myself 'warm.

"I am going to Richmond," added 'she; "it will be late before I return "to dinner; therefore let the cook get "you a chicken when you chuse to "dine, and don't walk out to increase "your cold."

'My heart leaped so when I found I 'was to be left at home, that I was 'afraid my emotion was visible in my 'countenance. My aunt, however, did 'not observe it; for, apparently, she 'had no suspicion that I knew any thing 'of her design to send me to a convent, 'and therefore she could not possibly 'guess my intention to leave her. But 'she certainly over-acted her part, all on 'a sudden to drop her favourite scheme, 'the marrying me to Sir Isaac Darby; 'and, when I might reasonably expect 'that my obstinate refusal to comply 'with her desires would create some 'coldness in her towards me, to find 'her not only free from all resentment, 'but even particularly kind and ob-'liging: sure this was sufficient to raise 'doubts in my mind, that something 'more than ordinary was at the bottom 'of all this affability.

'It often happens that cunning over-'reaches itself; for it seldom hits a 'medium, and generally does too much 'or too little. My aunt's behaviour 'would have led me to suspect that some 'design was forming against me; but if 'it had not been for Mrs. White's in-'formation, I should never have been 'able to discover what that design was, 'for my own penetration would have 'gone no farther than to suggest, that 'some scheme was laid to bring about 'my marriage with Sir Isaac Darby; but 'this fear would have been sufficient to 'have winged my flight; so that the arts 'my aunt made use of to lull me into 'security, proved the very foundation 'of my doubts.

'I had a new palpitation of the heart 'when I saw the chaplain follow my 'aunt into the coach. "Sure!" thought 'I, "Heaven approves of my design to "get away, since so many circumstances "concur to make it practicable." It was 'natural, my dear, as my religion was 'in danger from the persecutions pre-'paring for me, to think Heaven in-'terested in the success of my intended 'escape.

'There is certainly something very 'pleasing in supposing one's self, on 'certain occasions, the peculiar care of 'Providence. A Roman Catholick 'would have made little less than a 'miracle of so favourable a concurrence 'of circumstances. However, I sup-'pressed this rising sally of spiritual va-'nity, and employed my thoughts in 'contriving how to get to town with 'convenience and safety, without ex-'pecting any supernatural assistance.'

Here Miss Woodby broke in upon the fair narrator, with an exclamation that will be found in the following chapter.

CHAP. VII.

IN WHICH HENRIETTA CONCLUDES HER HISTORY.

'OH! my dear,' interrupted Miss Woodby, laughing, 'you have 'given an excellent name to a species of 'folly, which at once excites one's 'laughter and indignation. I know 'an old lady who is a constant frequent-'er of the chapel in Oxford Road, that 'has

'has arrived to such a heighth of spiritual vanity, as you justly term it, that 'she fancies Providence is perpetually 'exerting itself in miracles for her preservation, and that her most inconsiderable actions are under the immediate direction of Heaven; for she 'will tell you with surprising meekness and humility, that, unworthy as she is, 'she is in high favour with God; if she 'happens to stumble against a stone 'without falling, she says, with a smile 'of conscious satisfaction, "To be sure "God is very good to *me*." According 'to her, *God acts by partial, not by general laws*. And should it cease 'raining immediately before she is to 'go out, either to church or a visit, it 'is all one, she supposes that Providence 'is at that moment at work for her, and 'has cleared the skies that she may walk 'with conveniency; for she cannot always purchase a coach or a chair, half 'of her little income being appropriated 'to the preachers, from whose doctrine 'she has imbibed these self-flattering 'ideas.'

'Oh!' said Miss Courteney, laughing, 'you have heightened the colouring of this picture exceedingly.'

'Upon my word I have not,' said Miss Woodby; 'and—but that I am 'not willing to interrupt your story so 'long, I could give you an hundred 'proofs of this odd species of pride; for 'I assure you, my dear, the haughtiest 'beauty in the drawing-room, amidst a 'crowd of adorers, and in the fullest 'display of airs and graces, has not half 'the vanity of one of these saints of 'Whitefield's or Wesley's creation.'

'I really pity the poor woman you 'mentioned' said Henrietta; 'she appears to me to be very far from attaining to any degree of perfection: for 'may it not be supposed that this unreasonable confidence will lead her to 'neglect many duties very essential to a 'good Christian? For I have heard it 'observed, that the preachers of that 'sect chiefly declaim against fashionable 'follies; and, according to them, to 'dress with elegance, to go to a play or 'an opera, or to make one at a party 'of cards, are mortal sins; mean time 'poor mortals are wholly neglected, 'and superstition is made an equivalent 'for a virtuous life.'

'Yet a writer,' replied Miss Woodby, 'who is greatly admired by our sex, 'and who in his works pays court to 'all religions, carrying himself so evenly 'amidst them, that it is hard to distinguish to which he most inclines, has introduced these modern saints reclaiming a woman who had led a very 'vicious life, and doing more than all 'the best orthodox divines had done; 'and he has not thrown away his compliment. I dare say this numerous 'sect has bought up an impression of 'his book; and is not the Third Edition 'upon the title-page a very good return 'to it? Oh! my dear, there is no vanity like the vanity of some authors: 'it is not to be doubted but if there were 'mussulmen enough in the kingdom to 'add a unit more to the account of those 'editions, but we should find him introducing the Alcoran making proselytes from luxury.—But how have 'we wandered from your story! You 'are still at Windsor; I long to hear 'the rest.'

'I assure you, my dear,' said Miss Courteney, sighing, 'I have not been 'sorry for this little interruption: it has 'given some relief to my mind; for I 'know not how it is, but the recollection 'of this period is painful to me; and 'yet, under the same perplexity, and 'with the same apprehensions, I should 'certainly act again as I have done. 'I think I told you that Mr. Danvers 'went in the coach with my aunt; a 'circumstance with which I had reason 'to be rejoiced, as it greatly facilitated 'my escape. I was still lingering over 'the tea-table, uncertain in what manner I should perform my little journey, 'when Mrs. White came into the room: 'she was apprehensive that I should be 'uneasy at my aunt's and the chaplain's 'excursion together, as supposing it was 'to settle something relating to their 'scheme; and therefore made haste to 'inform me, that my aunt had been 'summoned to Richmond by a message 'from a Roman Catholick friend of 'her's, who was dangerously ill there; 'and desired to see her, together with 'Mr. Danvers,' who was her ghostly 'father, as they term it.

'Mrs. White continued to talk to 'me on the subject of my aunt's design, 'while I was considering whether it 'would be proper to make her the confidant of my intended flight to London, 'and engage her to procure me some vehicle to carry me thither. But it was

'possible she might not approve of my 'leaving my aunt so suddenly, in which 'case I should find it difficult to get 'away: besides, I did not think it rea-'sonable to involve her in the conse-'quences of my flight, by making her 'privy to it; and that the only way to 'enable her to justify herself to my aunt 'was not to make her guilty. I there-'fore resolved to steal out of the house, 'and go as far as I could on foot, not 'doubting but chance would throw some 'carriage in my way, in which I might 'finish my journey; and, to gain all the 'time I could, I told Mrs. White, that 'my anxiety had hindered me from sleep-'ing all night; that I was not well, and 'would go to my chamber and try to 'get some repose, desiring her not to 'disturb me.

'Having thus got four hours at least 'before me, I resolved to write a short 'letter to my aunt before I went. In 'this letter I told her, that having ac-'cidentally discovered her intention of 'sending me to a convent abroad, my 'terrors of such a confinement had 'forced me to throw myself under the 'protection of Mr. Damer; that I hoped, 'through his mediation, to convince her 'I had been guilty of no imprudences 'which could merit such severe usage as 'a punishment, and was not so unset-'tled in my religion as to be perverted 'by that or any other means. I begged 'her to believe that, except in that arti-'cle, and in marrying contrary to my 'inclinations, I would pay her the same 'obedience as to a parent; but that I 'would rather submit to the lowest state 'of poverty, than marry a man whom 'I could neither love nor esteem; or 'change the religion in which I was 'bred, and with which I was entirely 'satisfied. I concluded with earnestly 'intreating to be restored to her good 'opinion, which I assured her I would 'always endeavour to deserve.

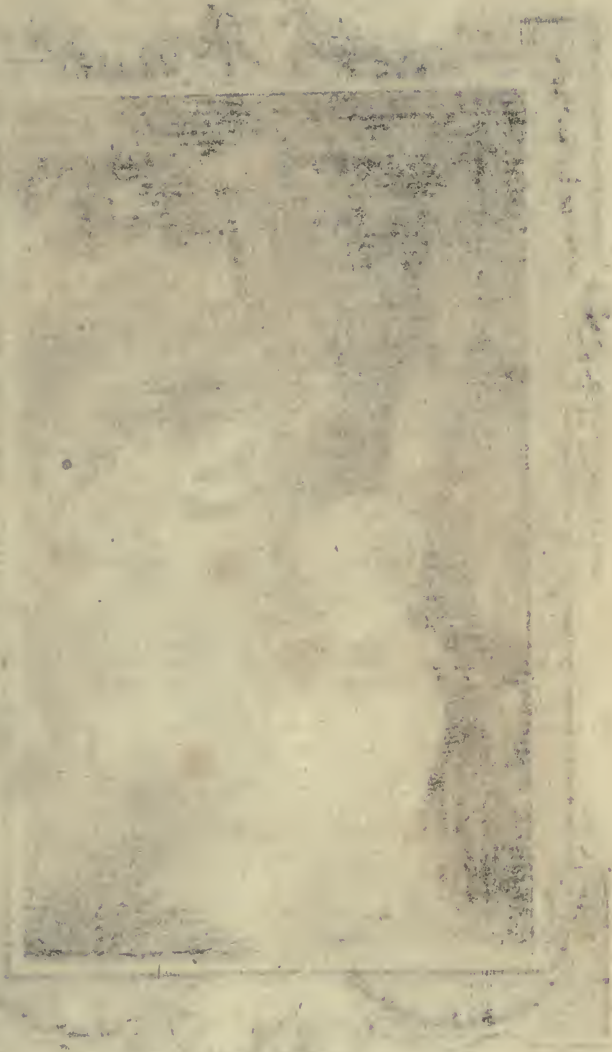
'Having sealed and directed this let-'ter, I put it into one of my dressing-'boxes, not doubting but, as soon as I 'was missing, every thing that belonged 'to me would be searched for letters, 'in hopes of farther discoveries. I 'next tied up some linen in a handker-'chief, and with an aching heart sallied 'out of my chamber, and crossed a pas-'sage-room which had steps leading to 'the garden. As soon as I had got 'out of the back-door, which opened 'into the forest, I concluded myself 'safe from discovery; and mended my 'pace, having no difficulty in finding 'my way, because I pursued the road 'which I had often traversed in a coach 'or a chaise.

'You will easily imagine my mind 'was full of melancholy reflections; 'and indeed so entirely was I engrossed 'by them for near an hour, that I did 'not perceive I was tired, till I grew so 'faint I was hardly able to move a step 'farther. I had now got into the open 'road, and it being about the time when 'I might expect to see some of the stage-'coaches from Windsor pass that way, 'I sat down under the shade of a large 'tree, at some distance from the road, 'impatiently wishing for the sight. All 'this time I had not been alarmed with 'the fear of meeting with any insult, 'for I had seen no one from whom I 'could apprehend any such thing; but 'I had scarce enjoyed this comfortable 'shelter three minutes, when I perceived 'two ill-looking fellows, as I thought 'them, making towards me with all 'the speed they were able. I started up 'in inconceivable terror, looking round 'me to see if any help was near if they 'should assault me, when I fortunately 'discovered the stage-coach; and being 'now eased of my fears, I resumed my 'station, till it was come near enough 'for me to speak to the driver. The 'two fellows who had given me such a 'terrible alarm, stopped short upon see-'ing the coach, and I really believe I 'had an escape from them.

'I called out to the coachman as soon 'as he could hear me. You know, my 'dear, the difficulties I found in getting 'admission. Little did those good wo-'men, who refused it, imagine that, to 'avoid a slight inconvenience to them-'selves, they were consigning me over 'to the greatest distress imaginable.'

'Wretches!' exclaimed Miss Wood-by, 'I cannot think of them without 'detestation; but, my dear,' pursued she, 'did not you wonder to see a per-'son of any figure in a stage-coach? 'As for you, I soon discovered there 'was something extraordinary in your 'case: but what did you think of me 'with such company, and in such an 'equipage?'

'Indeed, my dear,' said Miss Courte-ney,



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ney, 'at that time a ſtage-coach appeared to me a moſt deſirable vehicle, and I had not then the leaſt notion of it's being a mean one; ſo greatly do our opinions of things alter with our circumſtances and ſituations: beſides, a difficulty then occurred to my thoughts, which, amidſt the hurry and precipitation with which I quitted my aunt's houſe, had not been ſufficiently attended to before, and that was how I ſhould diſpoſe of myſelf for a few days, till Mr. Damer's return; for it was neceſſary I ſhould conceal myſelf with great care, having ſo much to apprehend from my aunt's bigotry and prejudices, and the (perhaps) intereſted officiouſneſs of her chaplain.

'Under what ſtrange diſadvantages had I lodgings to ſeek for! by an aſſumed name, with an immediate occaſion for them; and no recommendation to any particular houſe, which I could be ſure was a reputable one. Your politeneſs, and the unexpected offer of your friendſhip, encouraged me to communicate my diſtreſs to you, and to intreat your aſſiſtance; and I muſt ſtill regret the unlucky miſtake that brought me hither inſtead of Mrs. Egret's. And now, my dear, you have my whole ſtory before you. Have I not been very unfortunate? and am I not in a moſt dreadful ſituation? But what it chiefly concerns me to know, does your judgment acquit me of imprudence and folly in this precipitate flight from my aunt, to whom I owed ſo many benefits, and on whom I depended for ſupport?

'Approve your flight!' cried Miſs Woodby; 'Yes, certainly, child: who would not fly from a bigot, a prieſt, and an old hideous lover? I proteſt I would in your caſe have done the ſame thing.'—'Well, that is ſome comfort,' replied Miſs Courteney; 'but every body will not think as you do; and to a mind of any delicacy, ſure nothing is ſo ſhocking as to have a reputation to defend; and the ſtep I have taken will no doubt expoſe me to many unfavourable cenſures.'

'And do you imagine,' ſaid Miſs Woodby, 'that with a form ſo pleaſing, and an underſtanding ſo diſtinguiſhed, you will be exempted from the tax that envy is ſure to levy upon merit? Don't you know what the moſt ſenſible of all poets ſays—

'Envy will merit as it's ſhade purſue,
'And like a ſhadow proves the ſubſtance true.

'Take my word for it, it is no great compliment we pay to perſons, when we tell them that all the world ſpeaks well of them; for thoſe who are remarkable for any ſhining qualities will be more envied than admired, and frequently more calumniated than praiſed. But, child,' purſued the volatile Miſs Woodby, aſſuming a ſprightly air, 'how do you intend to diſpoſe of yourſelf to-day? It is late; I muſt go home to dreſs.'

'Diſpoſe of myſelf!' repeated Miſs Courteney, 'even in this ſolitary chamber; for I am determined, ſince I muſt ſtay here a day or two longer, to be as little with my landlady as poſſible.'

Miſs Woodby then fluttered down ſtairs, followed by her fair friend, who took that opportunity to tell Mrs. Eccles, that ſhe ſhould not leave her ſo ſuddenly as ſhe had imagined; which was very agreeable news to the milliner, who had no other objection to her beautiful lodger, but her extreme reſerve, which did not at all ſuit her purpoſes.

CHAP. VIII.

CONTAINING NOTHING EITHER NEW OR EXTRAORDINARY.

MISS Courteney, after having traverſed her chamber ſeveral times in great reſtleſſneſs of mind, at length reſolved to take a hackney-coach and drive to Mr. Damer's, ſuppoſing ſhe ſhould know from his clerks or ſervants the exact time when he was expected home; at leaſt they could give her a direction where to write to him, and it would be ſome comfort to acquaint him with her ſituation, and have his advice.

She had no ſooner formed this deſign, than ſhe haſtened to put it in execution; and having made a ſlight alteration in her dreſs, ſhe went down to Mrs. Eccles, and deſired her to ſend her maid for a coach, telling her ſhe was obliged to go into the city upon buſineſs, and deſired her not to wait for her at dinner. Mrs. Eccles inſiſted upon waiting till four o'clock

o'clock at leaſt, and attended her to the door, leſs out of complaiſance than to hear where ſhe ordered the coachman to drive; for the inquietude, irreſolution, and penſiveneſs, which ſhe diſcovered in her fair lodger, extremely heightened her curioſity to know her affairs.

Henrietta, though ſhe did not ſuſpect the motive of her officiouſneſs, yet not thinking it proper to let her know where ſhe was going, only bid the coachman drive to St. Paul's Church-yard; and, when there, ſhe gave him a fuller direction. 'Alas!' ſighed ſhe, when the coach ſtopped before the great gates of her guardian's houſe, 'were the hoſpitable 'maſter of this manſion at home, here 'ſhould I find a ſecure aſylum.'

As ſoon as a ſervant appeared, ſhe aſked if Mr. Damer was at home, that ſhe might with greater propriety introduce her farther enquiries; but was moſt agreeably ſurpriſed to hear him anſwer her in the affirmative, while he opened the coach-door: however, ſhe ordered the coachman to wait, and then followed the ſervant, who introduced her into a large parlour, and retired to acquaint his maſter with her being there.

Immediately a young gentleman, of an engaging appearance, entered the room, and deſired to know her commands. Henrietta ſeeing, inſtead of her guardian, a young man whom ſhe was quite a ſtranger to, bluſhed at firſt, but a more painful ſenſe of her diſappointment ſoon ſpread a paleneſs over her fair face.

'Is not Mr. Damer at home, Sir?' ſaid ſhe, in an accent that ſhewed her concern; 'my buſineſs was with him.'

'My father, Madam,' ſaid the young gentleman, 'is in Holland, from whence 'I came myſelf but lately; he has affairs 'to ſettle there which will detain him 'three or four weeks. But cannot I 'ſerve you, Madam?' added he, his voice, unperceived by himſelf, becoming ſofter while he gazed on a form which it was not poſſible to behold without ſome ſenſibility. 'Pray let me know, it will 'give me great pleaſure if I can be in 'the leaſt degree uſeful to you.'

'I ſhall be obliged to you, Sir,' replied Miſs Courteney, 'if you will forward a letter from me to Mr. Damer. 'It is a great unhappineſs to me that 'he is abroad at this time: he is my 'guardian, and at preſent I have need 'of his advice and aſſiſtance.'

'Pardon me, Madam,' ſaid young Mr. Damer, 'is not your name Courteney?'—'It is, Sir,' replied ſhe.

'Dear Miſs,' ſaid he, looking on her with a tender ſympathy, 'I wiſh my fa-'ther was at home, ſince you wiſh ſo. 'And yet, perhaps—all parents are 'alike,' added he, after a pauſe and ſighing; 'they are too apt to imagine that 'happineſs conſiſts in riches. But are 'you in a place of ſafety, Miſs? Are 'you ſure you are in no danger of being 'diſcovered? I wiſh it was in my power 'to offer you an aſylum; but——'

'Bleſs me, Sir!' interrupted Henrietta, in great aſtoniſhment, 'you ſeem 'to be perfectly well acquainted with my 'ſituation.'

'Yes, Madam,' ſaid Mr. Damer, 'I know ſomething of your affairs, and 'from my ſoul I approve of your courage 'and reſolution. A gentleman, named 'Danvers, was here yeſterday to enquire 'for you; your aunt's chaplain, is he 'not?'

'Yes, Sir,' replied Miſs Courteney, 'and my perſecutor—but what did he 'ſay? I ſuppoſe he repreſented me in 'ſtrange colours.'

'You need only to be ſeen, Madam,' ſaid Mr. Damer, 'to undeceive the moſt 'prejudiced: yet what he ſaid was not 'diſadvantageous to you, unleſs,' added he, with a ſoft ſmile, 'you think it a 'fault to have a tender heart.'

'Ah! the wretch,' interrupted Miſs Courteney, not able to contain her indignation; 'I ſee he has been propagat-'ing falſhoods injurious to my reputa-'tion; after having poiſoned the mind 'of my aunt with ſuſpicions that were 'the cauſe of my loſing her affection, 'he is endeavouring to deprive me of 'every friend I have in the world. But 'this, Sir, is the plain truth: he ſug-'geſted, as I have no reaſon to doubt, 'a prepoſterous match for me to my 'aunt; I rejected it; he found means 'to perſuade my aunt, that I liſtened 'privately to the addreſſes of ſome man 'who was an improper huſband for me. 'My aunt, in order to prevent my ruin, 'as ſhe ſuppoſed, inſiſted upon my ac-'cepting the perſon ſhe had choſen for 'me; and, upon my obſtinate refuſal, 'was prevailed upon by her chaplain to 'reſolve to confine me in a nunnery 'abroad. I had intelligence of this de-'ſign, and I ſecretly left my aunt's 'houſe, to prevent her executing it; but

'I am

'I am so far from having any secret engagement, that if I could be sure my aunt would not pursue her scheme of entrapping me in a convent, I would instantly return and bind myself by the most solemn oaths never to marry any one whom she does not approve.

'You see, Sir,' proceeded Miss Courteney, 'what need I have of your father's assistance; he is my only friend and protector; through his mediation I might expect to be restored to the good opinion of my aunt.'

'Well, Madam,' said Mr. Damer, 'if you will write to him, I will take care of your letter; and, if it be ready to-morrow, I will attend you myself for it; I hope you have no objection to my knowing where you are: in my father's absence I shall be proud to act as your guardian; though he has had the happiness of knowing you longer, yet his concern for your interest cannot be greater than mine. Shall I wait on you to-morrow morning, Miss?' added he. Henrietta, by his manner of urging this request, and his frequently casting his eye towards the door, as if afraid of some interruption, concluding that she detained him from business of more importance rose up immediately; and, giving him a direction to her lodgings by the name of Benson, told him, she would have her letter ready; but asked if it would not come safe inclosed to him by the penny-post, being unwilling, she said, to give him the trouble of coming for it.

'I beg, Madam,' said he, as he took her hand to lead her to the coach, 'that you will believe I can have no greater pleasure than that of serving you. It is necessary that I should have an opportunity of talking to you at leisure, that I may know how I can be farther useful to you.'

Having helped her into the coach, he bowed low, and retired hastily, with such an expression of tender concern on his countenance as any woman, less free from vanity than Miss Courteney, would not have failed to observe; but she making no other reflections on his behaviour, than that he was more polite than persons usually are who are bred up to business, congratulated herself on having found a friend, through whom she could securely correspond with her guardian, and receive his advice, so that she might now consider herself as being under his immediate care and direction, though absent; a circumstance that greatly alleviated her uneasiness.

Mrs. Eccles, who had waited dinner for her longer than had been agreed on, expressed great pleasure at seeing her look so chearful. 'To be sure,' said she, 'you have heard some unexpected 'good news; I am heartily glad of it. 'Well, now I hope you will have more 'spirits.' Henrietta smiled, but made no answer; for an ingenuous mind can only evade indiscreet curiosity by silence.

The cloth was scarce removed, when the young lord, who had now taken possession of his apartment in Mrs. Eccles's house, came into the parlour. Henrietta immediately rose up to retire to her own chamber, when he starting back, and standing at the door as if to obstruct her passage—'I came,' said he, 'Mrs. 'Eccles, to beg you would make me a 'dish of coffee; but since my presence 'drives this young lady away, I will 'go up stairs again.'

'Oh, by no means, my lord,' said Mrs. Eccles; 'I am sure Miss Benson 'will not let you think so.—You are 'not going, Miss, are you?' added she, turning to Henrietta.

'I have letters to write,' said the young lady, 'that will take me up the 'whole afternoon.'

'Well,' said my lord, 'I will drink 'no coffee then; for unless you stay, 'Miss, I shall be persuaded that my 'coming has driven you away. Let 'me intreat you,' pursued he, entering and leading her to a chair, 'to allow 'me the pleasure of drinking a dish of 'coffee with you; you will have time 'enough afterwards to write your letters.'

Miss Courteney, who was willing to avoid the appearance of singularity, sat down again, though with some reluctance, telling his lordship, that she would not be the means of disappointing him of his coffee; but that she must insist upon being permitted to withdraw in half an hour, having business of consequence upon her hands.

The young nobleman gave little attention to what she said, but gazed on her with an earnestness that threw her into some confusion. The milliner going out of the room to give orders about the coffee, he began in most vehement language

language to declare a passion for her, and called in the assistance of poetry, to express his admiration of her charms.

Henrietta, who in her own character would have treated this manner of address with ridicule and contempt, thought it became her, in her present circumstances, to resent it seriously; therefore rising, with some signs of indignation, she told him, that since his lordship thought proper to entertain her with such kind of discourse, she would immediately retire. My lord, who saw she was angry in good earnest, was excessively afraid of her leaving him; therefore taking her hand, which he forcibly held, till he had sealed a vow upon it with his lips that he would not say another word to offend her, he brought her back to her seat, which, upon seeing Mrs. Eccles enter, she resumed.

The conversation then took another turn; but Henrietta was too much chagrined to mix in it with any degree of chearfulness: besides, the party seemed to her to be but ill asserted, a nobleman, a milliner, and a young woman in obscure circumstances. Her delicacy was shocked, and all the politeness she was mistress of was scarce sufficient to hinder her from shewing how much she was displeased with herself and her company.

As soon as the tea-equipage was removed, she looked at her watch; and seeming apprehensive that she should not have time enough to write her letters, she withdrew with such precipitation, that they had no opportunity to solicit her longer stay.

'This is a strange girl,' said the young lord, throwing himself into his chair, from whence he had risen to return the hasty compliment she made at her departure, 'but divinely handsome! Who can 'she be? I vow to Gad I believe I shall 'be in love with her in earnest. Have 'you made no discovery yet, Mrs. 'Eccles?' pursued he. 'There is 'certainly some mystery in the case, 'and a love mystery it must be; for 'women are not even faithful to their 'own secrets, unless an amour is the 'business, and then they are impene-'trable.'

'Your lordship may be sure,' said Mrs. Eccles, 'that I have spared no 'pains to discover who she is; but she 'is excessively reserved, and talks so 'little, that there is no probability of 'entrapping her: yet I think there is one 'way by which your curiosity may be 'satisfied. Your lordship has seen a gay 'flighty lady with her, of whom she is 'very fond.'

'What, that ugly creature!' said my lord, 'that fastened upon me in your 'shop; do you mean her? Is Miss Ben-'son fond of that thing?'—'Oh! very 'fond,' replied Mrs. Eccles; 'they 'were shut up together four hours this 'very morning.'

'Then depend upon it she is the con-'fidant,' said his lordship. 'Oh! I 'guess your scheme; you would have 'me bribe her?'

'Bribe her, my lord!' repeated Mrs. Eccles; 'she seems to be a woman of 'some fashion. I dare say you would 'affront her extremely by offering her 'a bribe.'

'I am very sure,' interrupted his lordship, 'that she will not be able to 'resist the bribe I shall offer her: I will 'flatter her, my dear Mrs. Eccles, till I 'not only become master of all her 'friend's secrets, but even her own; 'but how shall I get an opportunity of 'talking to her alone?'

'I will engage,' said Mrs. Eccles, 'that it will not be long before she is 'here again; and if your lordship should 'happen to be below when she comes, 'I fancy you would not find it difficult 'to detain her a little while from her 'friend.'

'Well,' said my lord, 'I leave it 'to you to manage this interview for 'me: when I know who this Miss Ben-'son is, I can make my approaches ac-'cordingly; but when do you expect 'her down stairs again?'—'Not till 'supper-time,' said Mrs. Eccles; 'she 'is never weary of being alone.'—'Ah! 'that is a bad sign,' said he; 'I doubt 'I have a rival. Well, I will look in 'upon you at ten o'clock; perhaps I 'may find her with you.'

Mrs. Eccles assuring him she would engage her till that time, if possible, he went away humming an opera air, but with less vacuity of thought than usual, Miss Benson being so much in his head, that, if he had been accustomed to reflection, he would have concluded she was in his heart also, and that he was in love with her in earnest.

Henrietta in the mean time was employed in writing her letter to Mr. Damer,

Damer, to whom she gave a faithful account of all that had happened to her, and earnestly intreated his good offices towards effecting a reconciliation between her aunt and her. The inconveniencies she saw herself exposed to in her present situation made her so desirous of this happy event, that her letter was almost a continued repetition of solicitations for that purpose. She begged him, in case he did not return to England, to write to her aunt, and endeavour to soften her, assuring him that she pretended to no greater liberty than what an obedient daughter might expect from a parent; being resolved to obey her will in every thing, provided she might not be compelled to marry the old baronet, nor confined in a nunnery with a view to the change of her religion.

She expressed her satisfaction in the polite behaviour of his son to her, whom she would consider, she said, as her guardian in his absence, and would take no step without his advice and concurrence.

She had finished her letter long before the milliner's usual hour of supper; but being resolved to go down no more that evening, she spread letters and papers upon the table, as if she still continued extremely busy. Mrs. Eccles, upon entering her chamber to know if she was ready for supper, found her with the pen still in her hand; and was a good deal mortified to hear her say, that, having dined so late, she would not sup that night, but would finish her letters before she went to bed.

Mrs. Eccles did not think proper to press her; for her extreme reserve inspired her with a kind of awe, that made her cautious of giving her the least disgust; and Henrietta taking leave of her at her chamber-door for the night, she went away in great concern for the disappointment his lordship would meet with.

It was indeed a very mortifying disappointment to him, for his impatience to see Miss Courteney had brought him back much sooner than he had intended; and Mrs. Eccles, when she came down stairs, found him already in her parlour. When he heard the young lady's resolution, not to appear again that night, he took an unceremonious leave of his complaisant landlady, and joined his company again at White's, wondering to find himself in so ill an humour, on so slight an occasion, and that dice and Burgundy were scarce sufficient to call off his thoughts from this coy unknown, whom yet he did not despair of gaining.

CHAP. VI.

A VERY SHORT CHAPTER.

HENRIETTA, upon her coming down next morning to breakfast, was informed by Mrs. Eccles, that a gentleman had been enquiring for her that morning; but hearing she was not up, had left word that he would call again. She did not doubt but it was Mr. Damer, and was a little confused that his punctuality should so much exceed hers in an affair that immediately concerned her; but the truth was, the young merchant's impatience to see her had outstripped time, and he came much earlier than she had reason to expect him.

She retired immediately after breakfast, desiring that the gentleman might be shewn up stairs when he came again; for Mrs. Eccles, at her request, had made a small alteration in her apartment, and put her bed in an adjoining closet, that she might with more propriety receive a visit in her own room.

She was scarce got up stairs, when Mr. Damer was introduced: she apologized for the trouble he had in calling twice; and delivering him her letter, recommended it to his care with extreme earnestness, assuring him, she should be very unhappy till she had an answer. She then enquired more particularly concerning the visit Mr. Danvers had made him, anxious to collect from what he said what impression her flight had made upon her aunt.

'I will not flatter you Miss,' said Mr. Damer. 'Lady Meadows is extremely enraged. Mr. Danvers mentioned nothing of a design to put you into a convent; but owned that your aunt had a very advantageous match in view for you, which you rejected: and——'

'Pray go on, Sir,' said Henrietta, observing that he hesitated.

'Your aunt will have it, Madam,' pursued he, 'that your affections are engaged. I cannot believe that a young lady of your good sense would make an improper choice. I should

'be very glad to be able to convince 'my father that nothing of this kind is 'the case. Excuse me, Miss, I am 'anxious for your happiness; it would 'give me infinite joy to find that your 'aunt is mistaken.'

'My aunt has no reason, Sir, for her 'suspicions,' replied Henrietta; 'but 'if my affections were engaged, why 'should she think I had made an impro-'per choice?'—'Ah! Miss——' eagerly interrupted Mr. Damer.

'I hope, Sir,' said Miss Courteney, gravely, 'you will believe me, when I 'declare that my aunt's fears are with-'out foundation; it concerns me greatly 'that your father should not entertain 'the same idle suspicions; and, were he 'here, I am sure I could convince him.'

'Dear Miss,' interrupted Mr. Damer, 'I cannot suffer you to go on; do not 'imagine that I am not convinced. I 'had doubts, but you will excuse them; 'my great concern for your happiness 'was the cause. Rely upon me, I beg 'you; I will take care my father shall 'not be prejudiced, and till his return 'I am your guardian.'

Henrietta, upon a little reflection, was more pleased than offended at the doubts he so candidly acknowledged; in so young a man, such plainness and sincerity were far more agreeable than the refinements of compliment and flattery, and more suitable to the character in which he desired to be considered, and in which she did consider him. She thanked him for a solicitude, which she said was so advantageous to her; and, to shew him that she wished to give him all imaginable satisfaction with regard to her conduct, she entered into a particular detail of the situation she had been in with her aunt, whose views, with regard to her, she explained: she slightly touched upon the character of the chaplain, and imputed to his great influence over her aunt the rash and severe resolutions she had taken against her.

She was proceeding to justify herself for having left her aunt's house, when Mr. Damer interrupted her with some emotion: 'Every reasonable person, 'Miss,' said he, 'that knows your 'motives for taking this step, will not 'only hold you excused, but will even 'applaud you for not sacrificing your-'self to riches.'

'I am sure,' said Henrietta, 'my 'aunt would hear reason, were it not 'for that invidious chaplain, who fills 'her with suspicions, and animates her 'resentment. Oh, that Mr. Damer 'was come!'

'I hope,' said the young merchant, 'that we shall see him shortly; but in 'the mean time, Miss, let me know how 'I can be useful to you: Do you like 'your present lodgings? Are the people 'such as you approve? Let me know if 'you have any inclination to remove, 'and I will endeavour to settle you some-'where that will be agreeable to my fa-'ther. I suppose you would have no ob-'jection to lodge with an acquaintance 'of his, and where you will be near him.'

'No, certainly,' said Miss Courteney, 'it would be highly agreeable to me.'—'Well, Miss,' said Mr. Damer, rising, 'I will wait on you again in a day or 'two. But perhaps you have occasion 'for money; I have brought some with 'me; pray do not put yourself to any 'inconveniency, but draw for what 'sums you have occasion.'

'The trifle, Sir,' said Henrietta, blushing, 'that is in your father's hands, 'will not admit of my drawing very 'largely: however, I will venture to 'take up twenty pounds, because I have 'occasion to purchase some trifling 'things; for all my cloaths are at my 'aunt's, and I am in great hopes she 'will not send them after me: that would 'look indeed,' said she, sighing, 'as 'if I must never expect to return again; 'and I am resolved not to send for them, 'that it may appear I do expect and 'wish it.'

Mr. Damer, upon hearing this, pressed her to take forty guineas; but she said, twenty would do, having some money by her. He then took leave of her, with a promise to see her again soon; and left her greatly pleased with his friendly behaviour, and with the prospect of being soon with persons less obnoxious to her than Mrs. Eccles.

She had scarcely deposited her money in her desk, when Miss Woodby bolted into the room with her usual robust liveliness. Indeed her spirits were particularly exhilarated that day, having had the dear delight of conversing a whole hour with a beau, who said the civilest things to her imaginable; a piece of good fortune she did not often meet with, and for which, though her vanity did not suffer

suffer her to find it out, she was wholly indebted to her fair friend, the beau being no other than the young lord who lodged in the house, with whom she had been engaged in conversation great part of the time that Mr. Damer was with Miss Courteney. And if the reader is curious to know what passed between them, he will be fully informed in the next chapter.

CHAP. X.

WHICH GIVES THE READER A SPECIMEN OF FEMALE FRIENDSHIP.

MR. Damer had been about half an hour with Miss Courteney, when Miss Woodby came to pay her a morning visit. As soon as Mrs. Eccles saw a chair set her down at the door, she flew up stairs to acquaint her noble lodger with her arrival; he instantly followed her down, and meeting Miss Woodby at the bottom of the stairs, affected a joyful surprize at his good fortune in seeing her so unexpectedly again.

'The lady you are going to visit,' said he, 'is engaged with company, I 'believe; but I am resolved you shall 'not go away,' pursued he, taking her hand, and leading her into the parlour. 'I was so charmed with your conversa-'tion the first time I saw you, that it 'is not probable I will lose this oppor-'tunity of renewing our acquaintance.'

'Oh! your lordship is very obliging,' said Miss Woodby, suffering herself to be led into the parlour; while her transport at finding herself treated with so much gallantry, and her passionate desire of pleasing, threw her into such ridiculous affectation, that every limb and feature were distorted. Compliment, to which she was very little used, acting like strong liquors upon a weak head, she became so intoxicated, that she hardly knew what she did, which, joined to a natural aukwardness, produced the most absurd blunders in her behaviour; so that, endeavouring to trip with a lively motion to her seat, she overturned a light mahogany table that was in her way, and heard the crash of the china that was on it with very little emotion: the pleasure of shewing herself to the greatest advantage, absolutely engrossing her; and so unseasonably did she return his lordship's polite bow, when he had seated her in her chair, that their foreheads struck against each other with a force like the concussion of two rocks; but this accident, no more than the former, disturbed Miss Woodby's enjoyment of her present happiness; and, wholly insensible to the pain of her forehead, she immediately entered into conversation with his lordship, asking him, with the liveliest air imaginable, if he had been at Ranelagh last night; never once making the least reflection upon what he had told her of her friend's being engaged with company, which, as she knew her situation, might well have raised her curiosity.

The beau told her, he was not there; 'but you and Miss Benson were, I sup-'pose,' added he.

'Now your lordship mentions Miss 'Benson,' said she, without answering his question, 'pray tell me how you 'like her; is she not very handsome?'

'Yes,' replied my lord, 'she is 'handsome; but,' added he, looking full at her, 'she wants a certain lady's 'agreeable vivacity.'

'Oh, your servant, my lord,' said Miss Woodby, making the application immediately; 'but really, as your lord-'ship observes, she wants vivacity; 'there is something heavy and lumpish 'in her.'

'Yet she is genteel,' said my lord. 'Oh! extremely genteel,' cried Miss Woodby; 'but does not your lordship 'think she is rather too tall? being so 'slender as she is, does not that heighth 'give her a certain aukwardness?—But 'I really think she has one of the finest 'complexions in the world!'

'Has she not rather too much bloom,' said my lord. 'Why, yes,' replied Miss Woodby; 'I think her complexion 'wants delicacy; but no objection can 'be made to her eyes, you must own, 'except that they are rather too large, 'and roll about heavily.'

'Upon the whole,' said my lord, 'Miss Benson is tolerable; but I per-'ceive you are extremely fond of her by 'your partiality.'

'Oh, my lord,' said Miss Woodby, 'we are the greatest friends in the world; 'I conceived a violent friendship for 'her the first moment I saw her. You 'cannot imagine how ardent my friend-'ships are!'

'That is bad news for your lover,' said my lord; 'for love and friendship,

'the wife say, exclude each other; but 'I hope Miss Benson makes a proper 'return to so much affection.'

'Oh! we are united in the strongest 'bands of friendship,' said Miss Woodby; 'the dear creature has not a thought 'that she conceals from me: and though 'I have not been acquainted with her 'a week, she has intrusted me with all 'her affairs.'

'Indeed!' said my lord, 'not acquainted a week, and so communicative! Are you sure, my dear Miss 'Woodby, that this young lady is not 'a little silly?'

'I cannot say,' replied Miss Woodby, 'that her understanding is the best 'in the world; but she has a very good 'heart.'

'Your own is very good, I do not 'doubt,' said my lord, 'which leads 'you to make so favourable a judgment 'of another's. However, as she has 'laid open her affairs to you, you may, 'from the conduct she has avowed, 'collect your opinion of her.'

'Very true,' said Miss Woodby; 'and I do assure your lordship, that I 'cannot help approving of her conduct, 'because her motives were certainly 'just: though the ill-judging world 'may perhaps condemn her for running 'away from her aunt; and, from her 'hiding herself in a lodging, assuming 'another name, and such little circumstances, may take occasion to censure 'her; yet I am persuaded in my own 'mind that she is blameless.'

'Benson is not her name then?' said my lord, affecting great indifference. 'Oh, no, my lord,' said Miss Woodby, 'her name is Courteney. But bless 'me! what have I done! I hope, my 'lord, you will be secret; I did not intend to tell your lordship Miss Benson's true name. I would not for the 'world violate that friendship I have 'vowed to her.'

'Depend upon it, Madam,' said my lord, 'I will be secret as the grave. It 'is of no consequence to me to know 'her name; I shall never think of it 'again. But to be sure the poor girl is 'to be pitied. And so she ran away 'from her aunt; who is her aunt, pray?'

'Her aunt's name is Meadows,' said Miss Woodby, 'Lady Meadows; do 'you know her?'

'Not I,' said my lord, throwing himself into a careless posture, and humming an air, as if his attention was wholly disengaged; when suddenly turning again to Miss Woodby with a smile—

'Why,' said he, 'should not you 'and I be as good friends as Miss Benson and you are? our acquaintance is 'not of a much shorter date, and perhaps commenced nearly in the same 'manner.'

'I protest,' said Miss Woodby, 'and so it did; for I first saw your lordship 'in Mrs. Eccles's shop, and I happened 'to meet Miss Benson in a stage-coach 'about four days ago.'

'And there your acquaintance began?' said my lord; 'you have improved it well since, if she has really 'been ingenuous enough to let you into 'the true state of her affairs. I suppose 'there is a lover in the case.'

'A lover there certainly is,' said Miss Woodby; 'but he was of her aunt's 'chusing; and it is from this lover she 'fled.'

'O brave girl!' said my lord; 'but 'is she not fled to a lover of her own 'chusing?'—'No, I believe not,' said Miss Woodby.

'Well,' said my lord, 'I fancy she 'has deceived you, and that the gentleman who is with her now is her lover; 'he is a plain sort of man, Mrs. Eccles 'says, and looks like a merchant.'

'Oh!' said Miss Woodby, 'it is 'Mr. Damer her guardian, I suppose.' —'But this is a young man,' said my lord. 'Then perhaps it is her brother,' said Miss Woodby, 'who was abroad 'with a nobleman, and is now re'turned.'

'I think I hear him coming down 'stairs,' said my lord, 'I have a mind 'to see him as he goes out.' Saying this, he bowed and ran into the shop, leaving Miss Woodby a little confused at his abrupt departure: and now, for the first time, she reflected that she had been indiscreet, and revealed too much of her friend's situation; but being incapable of taking any great interest in the concerns of another, this thought did not affect her much; her spirits had been put into such a violent flurry by my lord's complaisant address to her, that she only considered her own satisfaction in holding him in conversation; and if he had come back to her again, she would have given him all the remaining part of Miss Courteney's history, without reflecting upon the baseness of the

Plate III.

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the part she was acting, and only sensible to the pleasure of engaging the attention of a man: for, by the fatal concurrence of a disagreeable figure, and much affectation, she was generally neglected by that sex whom she took all imaginable pains to please.

His lordship, at his going out of the room, had no otherwise taken leave of her than by a running bow, which left her some faint hopes of his return; but seeing him put on his hat and go hastily out of the shop, she concluded that he did not intend to come back: therefore she went up stairs to pay a visit to her friend, to whose account of her meeting with young Mr. Damer, and his friendly behaviour to her, she gave so little attention, her thoughts being wholly engrossed by the agreeable young nobleman, that when she left her, which was but a very short time afterwards, she scarce remembered any thing that had passed between them.

CHAP. XI.

IN WHICH OUR HEROINE IS IN GREAT DISTRESS.

IN the mean time the young lord, having an extreme curiosity to see the man whom he suspected to be his rival, followed Mr. Damer down the street, and had a full view of him as he crossed into another. He found he was young, and had an agreeable air, but there was a kind of pensiveness on his countenance, that did not seem to suit with the condition of a favoured lover. He readily admitted this thought, because it favoured his own wishes; he reflected on what he had heard from the communicative Miss Woodby, and concluded he had no reason to despair.

A young woman eloped from her relations, with nobody about her of authority enough to controul or direct her actions; these were very favourable circumstances for a man of intrigue: and he resolved to be no longer kept at a distance by a reserve, which he imputed either to affectation or artifice, and which a suitable share of boldness could only overcome.

Having settled the plan of his operations with Mrs. Eccles, whom he had strongly engaged in his interests, he retired to his own lodgings; for those he had at the milliner's were only hired to facilitate his designs upon Miss Courteney.

That young lady finding herself free from his intrusion, and being less disgusted with Mrs. Eccles's behaviour than usual, who was very much upon her guard, and had her reasons for being so, passed the day with more tranquillity of mind than her situation had hitherto permitted, and condescended, at Mrs. Eccles's intreaty, to spend two hours with her after supper at piquet.

In the mean time his lordship had conveyed himself into a closet in her apartment, and about eleven o'clock saw the unsuspecting fair one enter with a candle in her hand, and, after cautiously fastening the door, sit down composedly to read.

Her beauty, which was of that sort which inspires respect as well as love, the innocence of her deportment, her security amidst that danger which threatened her, excited sentiments that made him half ashamed of his design. Charmed with beholding her in so agreeable an attitude, her fair face reclined on one of her hands, her elbow leaning on the table, her book in the other hand, which she seemed intently to read, he opened the closet-door a little way, that he might have the pleasure of contemplating her at leisure.

This motion was not unobserved by Henrietta; she raised her eyes off her book, which made him hastily pull the door close again. Henrietta, now convinced that there was somebody in her closet, started up, and, dropping her book, cried out aloud for help. His lordship immediately rushed out of the closet, threw himself at her feet, and begged her not to be frightened. Indignation succeeded to terror; her face, which was all pale and wan before, was now crimsoned over; her eyes shot indignant flashes at the insolent invader; but, in a moment, recollecting the danger she was exposed to, again her face was overspread with paleness, and an universal trembling seized her. The young lord, who observed the beautiful emotion, and was beginning to be shocked at the boldness of his attempt, again conjured her not to be afraid, and vowed he would leave her room: but Henrietta, on whom these assurances made no impression,

preſſion, ſprung from him to the window, and, throwing up the ſaſh, cried out as loud as ſhe was able.

'Miſs Courteney,' ſaid he riſing, but keeping at a diſtance for fear of alarming her more, 'do not indiſcreetly expoſe yourſelf; I ſwear by Heaven I will leave your room.'

'What!' cried ſhe, amazed to the laſt degree to hear him pronounce her name; 'you know me then, and yet have dared to inſult me thus! But leave me, my lord, this inſtant leave me, or I will raiſe the neighbourhood by my cries.'

'Charming creature!' ſaid his lordſhip, looking on her with tenderneſs and awe, 'I do know you, and I know your virtue now; I will leave you: believe me I am ſorry for the terror I have put you into. Grant me a moment's audience to-morrow; I have ſomething to ſay to you that will convince you I am deſirous of meriting your pardon.'

He then bowed reſpectfully, and, unlocking the door, went down ſtairs; Henrietta all the time keeping cloſe to the window, that ſhe might be ready to call for help, if he ſhewed any deſign of ſtaying in her apartment: nor, till ſhe heard him enter his own, and ſhut the door after him, durſt ſhe venture from her poſt to ſecure her door, which ſhe did with the utmoſt precipitation, making it as faſt as ſhe could; and then ſhutting her window, for her cries had not been heard, ſhe paſſed the night in a chair, reſolving not to go to bed any more in that houſe.

The dangers ſhe was expoſed to, made her almoſt repent of having fled from her aunt's tyranny; and mortified as ſhe was by ſuch ſhocking inſults, ſhe thought it would have been a leſs misfortune to be the wife of Sir Iſaac Darby, or the inmate of a gloomy convent, than the avowed object of a libertine's paſſion.

Surpriſed as ſhe was that my lord was acquainted with her name, and anxious to know by what means he had made the diſcovery, yet it never once occurred to her that Miſs Woodby had betrayed her. Her generous mind was incapable of ſuggeſting ſuch a ſuſpicion, and ſhe was even doubtful whether Mrs. Eccles was privy to his inſolent attempt: ſo difficult it is for innocence to fathom the depths of guilt.

Amidſt the melancholy reflections which her ſituation gave riſe to, ſhe drew ſome conſolation from Mr. Damer's friendly concern for her. She reſolved to go to him in the morning and claim his promiſe of ſettling her immediately with one of his father's friends, yet without revealing the mortifying treatment ſhe had been expoſed to, and from which ſhe had extricated herſelf: for true virtue bluſhes to own it's conqueſts, becauſe thoſe conqueſts are proofs of it's having been attempted. Theſe various thoughts kept her waking the whole night; but towards morning ſhe fell into a ſlumber, from whence ſhe was rouſed by a loud knocking at her chamber-door. She roſe inſtantly from her chair, where ſhe had paſſed the night; and perceiving the day was far advanced, opened the door, and let in her landlady; who excuſed herſelf for diſturbing her, being apprehenſive, ſhe ſaid, that ſhe was ill, from her continuing ſo long in her chamber.

'It would not be ſurpriſing,' ſaid Henrietta coolly, 'if I ſhould be ill, conſidering the fright I was in laſt night. Did you not hear me cry out, Mrs. Eccles?'

'Dear heart,' ſaid Mrs. Eccles, ſmiling, 'hear you cry out! why, what was the matter? ſome groundleſs apprehenſions of thieves, I ſuppoſe: but there is no danger; my houſe has very good faſtening; I have lain in it many a night by myſelf, I aſſure you.'

'That may be,' ſaid Miſs Courteney; 'but I am reſolved never to lie in it another night: it would be well, Mrs. Eccles, if you were a little more cautious to whom you let your lodgings; rakes are dangerous company.'

'I hope I have no ſuch perſons in my houſe,' ſaid Mrs. Eccles. 'I have been inſulted in your houſe,' ſaid Henrietta, 'which obliges me to haſten my departure from it. Pray let your maid get me a coach to the door.'

'Why, you are not going, Madam, are you?' ſaid Mrs. Eccles, pertly. 'Not immediately,' replied Miſs Courteney, 'but I ſhall go to-day; at preſent I am going out upon buſineſs.'

'And why, pray, will you go to-day, Madam?' ſaid Mrs. Eccles ſtill more ſaucily. 'Becauſe,' ſaid Miſs Courteney, who did not like the accent in which ſhe ſpoke, 'I do not chuſe to ſtay in a houſe where I am liable to be inſulted.'

'I hope you intend to caſt no aſperſions upon my character, Madam,' ſaid

said Mrs. Eccles: 'I would have you 'to know that I value my character as 'much as any body, though I am not 'so prudish as some folks.'

'Will you order your maid to get me 'a coach?' said Henrietta, who was extremely apprehensive of some farther rudeness from this woman; 'I am in 'haste.'

'Insulted, indeed!' repeated Mrs. Eccles: 'fine airs for folks to give 'themselves, when nobody knows who 'they are, or what they are.' Henrietta finding that her insolence increased, told her she would go down herself, and send the maid for a coach, and was passing by her for that purpose; but Mrs. Eccles placed herself between her and the door: 'No, no, my fine scrupulous young 'lady,' says she, 'you shall not stir, I 'assure you.'

'Sure,' said Miss Courteney, trembling, yet endeavouring to seem very courageous, 'you will not dare to detain 'me!'—'Indeed but I will,' said Mrs. Eccles, 'till I am paid; I know nothing 'of you but your airs and affectation; 'I may never see you again, perhaps.'

The young lady immediately pulled out her purse, blushing at the new indignity that was offered her; and taking out a guinea, 'I agreed with you, Mrs. 'Eccles,' said she, 'for a guinea a week: 'here is a guinea for you, and now am 'I at liberty to go out?'

'Perhaps not,' said Mrs. Eccles; 'you have aspersed me with scandalous 'reflections, and I can tell you, Ma-'dam, I will have satisfaction.'—'Lord 'bless me!' said Miss Courteney, who was now frighted out of her seeming courage, 'what shall I do! what will be-'come of me?'

This exclamation immediately brought up his lordship, who had been listening at the door of his apartment, and heard part of what had passed.

As soon as Henrietta saw him her terror increased, not doubting but he came as an auxiliary to her landlady; but the contemptuous look he gave Mrs. Eccles, removed her apprehensions.

'What do you mean,' said he, in an angry tone, 'by treating this young 'lady in such a manner?—Miss Benson, 'do not be uneasy: if you are going, 'you shall meet with no hindrance; I 'ask your pardon for being the cause of 'your fright last night; I do assure you 'I am sincerely sorry for it.'

'I hope you are, my lord,' said Miss Courteney, 'and I thank you for this 'seasonable interposition.' Saying this, she hastened down stairs, and dispatched the maid for a coach; while she stepped into the milliner's parlour to settle her dress a little, and to put on her hat and cardinal, which she had brought down in her hand.

CHAP. XII.

IN WHICH THE HISTORY GOES FORWARD.

HENRIETTA was waiting impatiently for the coach, when the young nobleman entered the room. 'You are going, then, Miss?' said he, sighing. 'I waited at home all this 'morning for an opportunity of seeing 'you, that I might recommend such a 'resolution as I find your prudence has 'suggested to you. Mrs. Eccles is not 'a proper woman for you to lodge with, 'and this I believe her behaviour to-day 'has convinced you of; had she not 'made the discovery to you herself, I 'should have done it, partly to repair 'the affront I have been so unhappy to 'offer you, and partly to secure you 'against the like, by letting you know 'that you are in the house of a woman 'of doubtful character.'

This language bore the marks of so much prudence and sincerity, that Henrietta could not help being affected with it; and accordingly she expressed a grateful sense of his concern for her.

'I have something else to say to you,' said he, 'which possibly will surprize 'you more; but it is necessary you 'should know it, to avoid farther inconveniencies, by a misplaced confidence: 'it was your friend Miss Woodby that 'informed me of your true name and 'circumstances. I see you are shocked; 'she has indeed betrayed you, but less 'from malice, I believe, than folly. I 'am master of your secret, Miss Courte-'ney,' said he, speaking lower, and taking her hand; 'but you may depend 'upon it, I shall make no other use of 'it, but to serve you in whatever way 'you shall direct. Command my utmost 'services; dearest creature, dispose of 'me, my life, and fortune: never did I 'feel a real passion for any of your sex 'before.'

'My

'My lord,' interrupted Miss Courteney, concerned to find him again upon this strain, which destroyed the hope of his disinterestedness; 'since you know 'my situation, you must also know that 'such discourse is extremely embarrassing to me. I am at present under 'the displeasure of my friends, without 'whose consent I will never admit of an 'address of this kind.' She looked at him here; and observing him in some confusion, for indeed his intentions were not of that sort that could be communicated to her friends, she blushed at the humiliating idea that apparent confusion raised in her mind; but recovering herself—

'I am contented,' said she, 'that 'your lordship should know my name, 'since chance has ordered it so, and I 'depend upon your honour not to mention me. I must also acknowledge myself obliged to you for the discovery 'you have made of Miss Woodby's 'treachery; it is a very useful discovery, 'for otherwise I should still have confided in her, and been again betrayed.' His lordship was going to reply with great eagerness, when the maid came in, and informed Miss Courteney, that a coach was at the door.

'You are going, then?' said he, with a melancholy look; but, ere he could proceed, Mrs. Eccles entered, and, with a countenance and voice altered to great obsequiousness, told Henrietta, that the gentleman who had been there yesterday enquired for her. 'O how lucky is 'this!' exclaimed Miss Courteney: 'let 'him be shewn up stairs, I'll wait on 'him.' The milliner having withdrawn, the young lord catched hold of Henrietta's hand as she was leaving the room—

'And can you be so cruel,' said he, 'to quit me thus without giving me the 'least hope?'—'Pray, my lord,' said Miss Courteney, drawing her hand from him with an air disdainful enough, 'no 'more of this idle gallantry.'

'Who is this gentleman that enquires 'for you?' said he, with a beseeching air.

'My lord,' replied Miss Courteney, 'the gentleman is my friend.'—'Say 'rather your lover,' said he: 'Oh! 'what joy you discovered when you 'heard he was come!'—'I had reason 'for being rejoiced,' interrupted she; 'he is my guardian, who has the care 'of my affairs.'—'Your guardian,' repeated his lordship, 'may I not know 'his name?'

'He is the guardian of my person rather than my fortune,' said Henrietta; 'the poor trifle that I can call my own, 'does not deserve the name of fortune. 'It is my unhappiness,' added she, sighing, 'to be in a situation that exposes 'me to unworthy suspicions, and subjects me to humiliating explanations. 'You know my name, my lord, therefore you may know the name of the 'person under whose protection I shall 'be for the future; Mr. Damer is my 'guardian, he is a considerable merchant 'in the city.'

'Enough,' cried the lover, kissing her hand in a rapture, while she was struggling to be gone from him, 'I know 'him. Say only,' pursued he, still endeavouring to detain her, 'that you will 'permit me to see you again.'—'Excuse me, my lord,' said Henrietta, breaking from him, 'I cannot grant 'your request; though I must repeat the 'one I made to you, Take no notice of 'of your having met with me, and suffer me to be obliged to you for your 'secrecy.'

'O! doubt me not,' said he, following her to the stairs, and taking a passionate leave of her with his eyes, 'I will 'obey you.'

Henrietta answered no otherwise than by a courtesy, and hastened up to Mr. Damer, wondering at this unexpected visit, and indulging a flattering hope that his father was returned.

Mr. Damer met her as she entered the room, and, bowing more gravely than usual, told her, that he was afraid he kept her at home, being informed by her landlady that she was just going out.

'I was going out,' said Miss Courteney, 'but it was to you.'—'Were you!' replied he, with a smile of pleasure that beamed over his countenance; 'have 'you any new commands for me? I am 'glad I came so seasonably.'

'But tell me, Sir,' said Miss Courteney, 'is my worthy guardian come back? 'have you any news for me? This visit 'was unexpected.'

The young merchant was a little disconcerted at this question; for he had reasons which he did not care to own for visiting her so soon again: he had a glimpse of the young lord, as he passed by the parlour the day before; he saw him

him come out of the houſe; obſerved that he followed him, and looked at him with an inquiſitive eye. He began to ſuſpect that this gay gentleman had ſome deſign upon Miſs Courteney, and that ſhe might have an inclination for him. He therefore reſolved to take her immediately out of his way, and had already ſecured to her a ſafe retreat.

'I wiſh,' ſaid he, 'that I had any 'better news to bring you, than that I 'have provided you a lodging with the 'wife of one of my father's factors; ſhe 'is a ſenſible woman, and will treat you 'with great reſpect. I am perſuaded 'my father will be pleaſed to find you 'there.'—'And I am ready,' ſaid Henrietta, eagerly, 'to go immediately; for 'my intended viſit to you to-day was to 'preſs you to find ſome ſuitable lodging 'for me. I don't know the perſon with 'whom I am at preſent; and ſhe has 'no woman-lodger in the houſe but 'myſelf.'

'You have a great deal of prudence, 'Miſs,' ſaid Mr. Damer, who was indeed exceſſively pleaſed to find her ſo deſirous of going; 'I fancy you can ſoon 'ſettle with your landlady; and we will 'make uſe of that hackney coach which 'ſtands at the door, and which you ſent 'for, it ſeems.'—'I have ſettled already with her,' ſaid Miſs Courteney; 'and this ſmall parcel you ſee will be 'all my luggage, except the money you 'paid me yeſterday,' added ſhe, ſmiling, and unlocking her deſk to take it out.

Mr. Damer very politely took up her little parcel, and carried it down ſtairs. Mean time Miſs Courteney was ſo much miſtreſs of her reſentment as to take a civil leave of Mrs. Eccles; and Mr. Damer, who was waiting for her at the door, handed her into the coach, and came in himſelf, after he had given the man directions where to drive.

The young nobleman, who was ſtanding at one of his windows, ſaw her depart with great uneaſineſs. She was now in the hands of her guardian, and conſequently his approaches would be more difficult; but youth and fortune think every thing attainable. His paſſion for Henrietta was violent enough to make him run all hazards to obtain her on any terms but marriage. Nothing is more eaſy than for love to conquer reaſon; it's greateſt triumph is when it is victorious over intereſt. The Earl of ——, father to this young lord, was negotiating a match for him with a young woman of very great fortune, the daughter of an eminent packer in the city. The noble youth, ſtimulated by forty thouſand pounds, had pleaded his paſſion with ſuch ſucceſs, that the lady preferred him to all his titled rivals, and he had a great many, from the baronet up to the duke. The honeſt packer, ſacrificing his ambition to his daughter's inclinations, choſe rather to let her follow her taſte, and be only a counteſs, than become father-in-law to a duke by croſſing it: an admirable inſtance of humility it muſt be confeſſed, and ſcarce to be equalled but by that of the nobleman, who, with ſuch generous contempt of hereditary honours, ſolicited his alliance; but, happily for the reformation of manners, ſuch inſtances are not now very rare.

This marriage therefore being in great forwardneſs, it behoved the young lord to be cautious in proſecuting his ſcheme upon Miſs Courteney. He was convinced ſhe was virtuous; and that the only way to undermine that virtue was to make himſelf ſure of her heart, before he diſcovered that his repentance was but feigned, and his intentions not honourable; when the paſſion ſhe had for him would excuſe, if not juſtify, an attempt that paſſion forced him to make; firmly depending on the poet's maxim, that *the faults of love by love are juſtified.*

The great point was to bring her to admit of his addreſſes without the knowledge of her friends, for which he could urge reaſons ſufficient; and when that point was gained, he might ſecurely reckon upon ſucceſs: for a young woman who engages in a private correſpondence of that kind, deprives herſelf of the ſuggeſtions of prudence, the caution of experience, the counſels of wiſdom, and the reſtraint of authority; her whole conduct is then influenced by the paſſion with which ſhe is actuated, which is at once her impulſe and her guide.

Our lover, having given ſome ſighs to the departure of his miſtreſs, comforted himſelf in the hope of ſeeing her ſoon, with more advantage, ſince he had in ſome degree ſecured her confidence by the diſintereſted advice he had given her with regard to Mrs. Eccles; and having now no farther occaſion for the apartment he had hired in that houſe, he quitted it immediately, not without diſcovering in his behaviour to her at parting ſome part

of that contempt which even the greatest libertines feel for such as assist their criminal designs.

Mean time Henrietta, extremely pleased with the care and attention of her new guardian, was by him conducted to a large well furnished house in the city, and received with great respect by the mistress of it, who was a middle-aged woman, with a benevolent aspect and an easy agreeable behaviour.

'Mrs. Willis,' said Mr. Damer, leading in Miss Courteney, 'permit me 'to introduce to you this young lady, 'my father's ward, and at present under 'my care: I hope you will make every 'thing agreeable to her during the time 'she stays with you.—Miss Benson,' added he, 'I need not give Mrs. Willis 'any other recommendation to you, than 'that she is a friend of my father's, and 'very much esteemed by him.'

Henrietta, though in some confusion at being introduced under a feigned name to a friend of Mr. Damer's, saluted her with a graceful air, and replied to the compliments she made her with great politeness; but took the first opportunity of her withdrawing, to ask Mr. Damer, why he concealed her true name from a friend of his father's?

Mr. Damer asked her pardon for not having consulted her before on that subject; but said, that by still continuing the name of Benson, she would be more secure from the search her aunt might make for her.

'Alas! Sir,' said Miss Courteney, 'I am afraid my aunt is too much of-'fended to be at any pains to find me 'out. I am more apprehensive of the 'contrivances of Mr. Danvers; he, no 'doubt, has strong reasons for putting 'her upon such harsh measures. While 'I was alone and unprotected, I thought 'it necessary to conceal myself, since it 'was not impossible but I might have 'been forced away; but I am sure no 'such attempt will be made, when it is 'known that I am under my guardian's 'protection. I think therefore this 'gentlewoman ought to be acquainted 'with my name. I would avoid as 'much as possible the appearance of 'mystery. I shall never recollect, with-'out pain, the sad necessity that has re-'duced me to it.'

'It will not be prudent,' said Mr. Damer, 'to alter our measures now: I 'have called you Miss Benson; the discovery of your true name will come 'with more propriety from my father, 'when he has accommodated matters 'between your aunt and you: we may 'expect a letter from him in a day or 'two, in which he will probably fix the 'time of his return. In the mean while, 'I hope you will find yourself agreeably 'situated here. I have agreed for your 'board and lodging.'

'At a moderate price, I hope,' said Miss Courteney; 'my circumstances do 'not entitle me to great expence.'—'I 'have taken care of that,' said Mr. Damer. Mrs. Willis coming in that moment, he recommended Miss Courteney to her care, promising, when he heard from his father, to come immediately with the news. He then took his leave, and Mrs. Willis conducted her fair lodger to another parlour, where the cloth was laid for dinner, and introduced two pretty children to her, a boy and a girl, with whom the young lady was extremely pleased.

There was in the countenance of this woman so much sweetness and complacency, and such an unaffected politeness in her behaviour, that Henrietta found herself insensibly disposed to like her, and was pleased to hear her fall naturally into an account of herself with a frankness and simplicity that denoted the goodness of her heart.

From what she said, Miss Courteney collected that she had made a marriage of choice rather than of prudence, and that industry had supplied the place of fortune. She found she was under great obligations to the elder Mr. Damer, who had settled her husband in an advantageous way at Leghorn, where he acted as his factor, and had enabled her to furnish that large house, in a very genteel manner, for the reception of such merchants as came from abroad, and were by him recommended to lodge with her. Her extreme tenderness for her husband, which had hurried her to Leghorn upon hearing that he was ill, that she might have the satisfaction of attending him herself, and her anxiety for her children, which brought her back as soon as he was recovered, that she might re-assume her care of them, were qualities which won her the esteem of Miss Courteney. She marked with what becoming reserve she slightly touched upon her family and connections, which were very genteel, and by which Henrietta accounted for the

the eafy politeneſs of her manners and behaviour, ſo ſeldom found in perſons of her rank.

The young lady then turned the diſcourſe upon her guardian's ſon, whoſe character ſhe was deſirous of being acquainted with. Mrs. Willis told her, that he was a ſober diligent young man, and though the heir of immenſe riches, yet applied himſelf to buſineſs with as much induſtry as if he had his fortune to make: that he had for ſeveral years tranſacted his father's buſineſs in Holland, from whence he was but lately returned; and that he traded largely for himſelf.

'Before I went to Leghorn,' added ſhe, 'there was ſome talk of his being 'to be married to the daughter of a very 'rich citizen; but ſince my return, 'which was about a week ago, I have 'heard nothing of it, not having ſeen 'Mr. Damer till the day that he came 'to tell me I ſhould be ſo happy as to 'have you, Madam, for my lodger.'

Miſs Courteney having paſſed this day more agreeably than ſhe had done any ſince ſhe had left her aunt, was at night conducted by Mrs. Willis to a genteel apartment, conſiſting of a bed-chamber and dreſſing-room. She diſmiſſed the maid whom Mrs. Willis ordered to attend and undreſs her; and being greatly fatigued for want of reſt the preceding night, loſt all her cares, her anxieties, and reſentments, in the ſweet oblivion of a calm and uninterrupted ſleep.

CHAP. XIII.

THE HISTORY STILL ADVANCES.

HENRIETTA, though an early riſer, and though ſhe roſe next morning earlier than uſual, yet found, upon her going down, Mrs. Willis had waited breakfaſt for her ſome time.

As ſoon as the tea-equipage was removed, ſhe retired to leave Mrs. Willis at liberty to go about her domeſtick affairs; and, when alone, was again aſſaulted with all thoſe cruel reflections which had almoſt inceſſantly filled her mind ſince her flight from her aunt. Among theſe, Miſs Woodby's treachery ſuggeſted none of the leaſt painful: ſhe was aſhamed of her credulity, of her ill-placed confidence; indignation for the ſhocking treatment ſhe had met with from her ſucceeded. She was upon the point of ſitting down to write to her, and to expreſs the deepeſt reſentment of her malice and treachery; when, recollecting the extreme levity of that young woman's temper, her ridiculous affectation, her folly and inſenſibility, ſhe thought it would ill become her to make ſerious remonſtrances to one who only merited contempt; that, by taking no farther notice of her, that contempt would be beſt expreſſed, and her own conſciouſneſs of the part ſhe had acted would account for it.

While ſhe was thus ruminating, Mrs. Willis's maid introduced two porters bringing in a large trunk to her apartment. They delivered her the key ſealed up, and a letter from Mr. Damer, in which he informed her, he would wait on her that afternoon.

She opened the trunk trembling; it contained all her cloaths, linen, and all the trinkets her aunt had given her. She ſearched eagerly in it to ſee if there was a letter for her; but finding none, ſhe threw herſelf into a chair, and burſt into a flood of tears.

While her aunt retained her cloaths, ſhe had formed a feeble hope that ſhe was anxious for her return, and would facilitate it, by aſſuring Mr. Damer, that ſhe would no more preſs her to the hated marriage, nor think of confining her in a convent; but now what could ſhe conclude, but that ſhe had abandoned her for ever, and that a reconciliation was not to be expected? The moſt gloomy proſpects offered themſelves to her view, poverty, dependence, neglect; but, what was worſe than all, the loſs, perhaps, of reputation. How ſhould ſhe be able to excuſe herſelf to the world for her late action; the world which judges actions only by their ſucceſs: and when it beheld her unhappy and reduced to indigence, would not fail to conclude her guilty?

In theſe melancholy apprehenſions did ſhe wear away the hours till ſummoned to dinner by Mrs. Willis, who, with tender concern, perceived that ſhe was afflicted, but would not diſcover that ſhe perceived it; and uſed her utmoſt endeavours to amuſe her, yet without any apparent ſolicitude, leſt it ſhould alarm her ſenſibility with a fear that her uneaſineſs was obſerved.

Mr. Damer came, according to his promiſe, in the afternoon: his arrival gave almoſt as much ſatisfaction to Mrs.

Willis, as to her fair anxious lodger, from a hope that it would produce ſome comfort to her. The young merchant inſtantly diſcovered that Henrietta had been weeping; and, as ſoon as Mrs. Willis withdrew, he tenderly approached her, and taking her hand, aſked her if any thing new had happened to give her diſturbance? Henrietta replied with a haſty queſtion, 'Have you any meſ-'ſage for me from my aunt, Sir?'

'I cannot ſay I have a meſſage for 'you, Miſs,' anſwered Mr. Damer; 'your aunt has indeed wrote to me.'—'May I not ſee her letter?' aſked Miſs Courteney again, eagerly. 'To be ſure,' ſaid he, taking it out of his pocket, and preſenting it to her, 'I wiſh it was con-'ceived in more favourable terms.' Miſs Courteney read it trembling, and found it as follows:

'SIR,

'I Have given directions that every 'thing which belongs to that un-'happy girl my niece ſhould be ſent to 'you, that, if you know where ſhe is, 'they may be conveyed to her. She has, 'by her ſcandalouſly running away from 'me, ruined her own character, and 'brought aſperſions upon mine; ſince 'even thoſe who condemn her moſt, 'will likewiſe blame me, as if I had 'acted unkindly towards her.

'May the loſs of my affection be the 'leaſt of her misfortunes; though the 'worſt that can poſſibly happen are 'likely to be the puniſhment of her in-'gratitude and folly.'

Henrietta returned the letter to Mr. Damer with a ſigh. 'I have indeed,' ſaid ſhe, 'irrecoverably loſt her affec-'tion; but, Sir, it is fit my aunt ſhould 'know where I am, and that I ſolicited 'your protection as ſoon as I could. 'This will preſerve me from ſome of 'thoſe unfavourable ſuſpicions which 'ſhe mentions ſo ſeverely. I will write 'to her inſtantly.'

'Oh! no, by no means,' ſaid Mr. Damer; 'I think it will be beſt for me 'to make a viſit to Lady Meadows, 'and tell her, that you are under 'my care, and that I have placed you 'here.'

'And will you take the trouble to go 'to Windſor, Sir?' ſaid Miſs Courteney, extremely delighted with this expedient. 'I would go any where,' ſaid Mr. Damer, 'to ſerve you. Pray make 'yourſelf eaſy.'

'I ſhall be eaſier,' ſaid Miſs Courteney, 'when my aunt knows that this 'ſcandalous runaway is under proper 'protection, and is accountable for all 'her actions to your father. Perhaps 'ſhe may relent when ſhe is convinced I 'am not ſo indiſcreet as ſhe imagined, 'and that I had no other motive for 'leaving her but the fear of being con-'fined in a convent. If you find my 'aunt abſolutely reſolved not to be re-'conciled to me, I muſt then conſider 'how to diſpoſe of myſelf in a way more 'ſuitable to my circumſtances.'

'Remember, Miſs,' ſaid Mr. Damer, with ſome emotion, 'that you are 'under my care. I hope you will take 'no reſolution without acquainting me.' —'No, certainly,' replied Henrietta— 'but, Sir, I have no fortune; I am 'lodged, attended, and treated, as if I 'had a very conſiderable one. This ex-'pence I ſhall not be willing to ſupport 'a great while longer; it will break in 'too much upon that trifling ſum, which 'was put into your father's hands, for 'my brother's uſe as well as mine. 'Heaven knows,' ſaid ſhe, ſighing, 'whether he is alive; if he is, he will 'probably need it; if he is not, it 'will go but a very little way in ſup-'porting me in the manner in which I 'now live.'

While Henrietta was ſpeaking in this manner, Mr. Damer ſeemed ready to interrupt her ſeveral times, but checked himſelf as if upon better recollection. When ſhe was ſilent, he walked about the room, muſing; then ſuddenly turning towards her—

'Theſe conſiderations, Madam,' ſaid he, 'ought at leaſt to be poſtponed till my 'father's return, and I think you may 'rely upon his prudence; he will cer-'tainly take care that your expences 'ſhall not exceed your income: in plac-'ing you here, I have done what I 'thought would be agreeable to him.'

Henrietta, obſerving that he was in ſome confuſion, was concerned that ſhe had ſpoke ſo freely, being apprehenſive that he underſtood what ſhe had ſaid as a diſtruſt of his prudence. She therefore told him, that if he found her aunt implacable, ſhe would be extremely well ſatisfied to continue with Mrs. Willis as

as long as Mr. Damer should think it necessary.

This assurance satisfied the young merchant, who left her with a promise to see Lady Meadows the next day, and to wait on her as soon as possible with an account of the success of his visit.

She passed this interval in a state of anxiety and suspence that doubled every hour. As soon as she saw Mr. Damer again, she endeavoured to read in his countenance, before he spoke, the news he had brought her.

'Well, Miss,' said he, 'I have seen 'your aunt.' He paused; and Henrietta, in a faultering accent, begged him to tell her, in one word, whether he had succeeded or not?

'Indeed I have not,' said he; 'Lady 'Meadows seems resolved never to for-'give you for running away from her; 'but don't despair, my father may have 'more weight with her.'—'It is at least 'some comfort,' said she, 'that she 'knows I am under your protection.'—'I have a letter from my father,' said Mr. Damer; 'he has got the gout in 'his right hand; he dictated it to one of 'his clerks, and therefore speaks with 'reserve of you. He desires me to tell 'you, that he hopes to be in London in 'three weeks at farthest, when he will 'use his utmost endeavours to reconcile 'you to your aunt; and, in the mean 'time, recommends you most affec-'tionately to my care.'

This account of her guardian's kind concern for her, gave some relief to the depressed spirits of Miss Courteney, who, although she had not flattered herself with any hope from the young merchant's mediation with her aunt, was as much shocked at the confirmation of her continued displeasure, as if she had not expected it. However, she expressed a grateful sense of his services, and disposed herself to wait with patience for the arrival of Mr. Damer, who alone could determine her destiny.

CHAP. XIV.

CONTAINING SEVERAL MYSTERIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES.

HENRIETTA had been about a fortnight in the house of Mrs. Willis, whose good sense and polite behaviour had entirely won her esteem, when, on a sudden, she became reserved and thoughtful, and often failed in those little attentions which mark respect, and an extreme willingness to oblige. She, who had avoided the least appearance of curiosity to know more of her affairs than what she pleased to disclose, now asked questions with an inquisitive air, and seemed to seek for occasions of collecting a fuller knowledge of her from her conversation.

Henrietta had insisted upon her being made acquainted with her true name and circumstances, from the time that Mr. Damer had acknowledged to her aunt that she was under his care, which had then produced no other alteration in Mrs. Willis than rather an increase of respect towards her, which she conceived due to her birth.

The young lady, whose extreme sensibility was not the least of her misfortunes, observed her increasing coldness, and suffered great uneasiness. She had willingly indulged a tenderness and esteem for her; and was concerned to find, from her altered behaviour, that either she had failed in her endeavours to acquire the friendship of Mrs. Willis, or that the woman whom she had conceived so good an opinion of, was in reality not deserving of hers.

However, she was determined not to let Mr. Damer perceive that she was dissatisfied with her behaviour; and she continued to live with her in the same easy manner as formerly, notwithstanding the coldness and constraint with which she was now treated.

Mr. Damer scarce ever failed to call and see her once a day; but one day he returned about an hour after he had been with her, and told her he had just received letters from his father, in which he acquainted him that Mrs. Willis would in a few days have several foreign merchants in her house, whom he had recommended to lodge with her; and that, his stay in Holland being protracted for some time longer, he thought it would not be proper for Miss Courteney to reside with Mrs. Willis till his return, as her house would be full of men.

'My father,' added Mr. Damer, 'desires me to ask you, Miss, whether 'you have any objection to go into the 'country for a few weeks. He has a 'distant relation, a widow, who lives 'at

'at Hampſtead, with whom he ſays he 'will be glad to find you at his return. 'He begs you will excuſe his not writ-'ing to you, having the gout ſtill in his 'hand; and deſires me to aſſure you 'of his tendereſt concern for your wel-'fare.'

A week before, Henrietta would have thought it a misfortune to have left Mrs. Willis to go into any other lodging; but ſhe was ſo piqued by her behaviour, that ſhe heard this news without any uneaſineſs, and told Mr. Damer ſhe would implicitly follow her guardian's directions.

He ſaid he would conduct her to his couſin's himſelf; and took leave of her, after he had deſired her to be ready for her little journey the next day.

Mrs. Willis came up to her apartment ſoon after Mr. Damer went away. 'I hear I am ſoon to loſe you, Miſs,' ſaid ſhe, entering. 'Yes,' replied Miſs Courteney coolly, 'ſuch is my guar-'dian's pleaſure; but,' added ſhe, ſmiling, 'you will not miſs me; you will 'have other company.'—'Other com-'pany!' repeated Mrs. Willis.

'Mr. Damer tells me,' ſaid Miſs Courteney, 'that your houſe will be full 'ſoon; ſome gentlemen recommended 'by his father will be here.'

'It is ſtrange,' ſaid Mrs. Willis, 'that I ſhould know nothing of it. Have 'you had a letter from your guardian, 'Madam?'

'No,' replied Miſs Courteney; 'but 'his ſon has heard from him. But,' purſued ſhe, after a little pauſe, 'it 'is ſtrange, as you ſay, that you 'ſhould not know you are to have new 'lodgers.'

Mrs. Willis looked at her attentively, as ſhe ſpoke theſe words: 'May I aſk 'you, Miſs,' ſaid ſhe, 'the cauſe of 'your ſudden removal?'

'I know of none,' replied Miſs Courteney; 'but that, my guardian 'thinks it will not be proper for me to 'ſtay among ſo many gentlemen as will 'ſhortly be your lodgers.'

'I wiſh there had been a better reaſon 'than that,' ſaid Mrs. Willis; 'for I 'am very ſure I am to have no lodgers 'recommended by the elder Mr. Damer, 'otherwiſe I ſhould have known it.'

'Has not his ſon told you ſo?' aſked Miſs Courteney, in great confuſion of thought.

'He told me nothing,' replied Mrs. Willis, 'but that you are to leave me 'to-morrow.'

'Lord bleſs me!' cried the young lady, in great emotion, 'what can this 'mean!'

'Suffer me,' ſaid Mrs. Willis, looking on her with tenderneſs and concern, 'to aſk you a few queſtions: when you 'know my motives, I am ſure you will 'not think that it is an impertinent cu-'rioſity which makes me take this liber-'ty, but my anxiety for you.'

'Dear Madam,' interrupted Miſs Courteney, 'aſk me what you pleaſe: 'you alarm me exceſſively.'

'I would not alarm you,' ſaid Mrs. Willis; 'but I will own to you that I 'have fears; nay, more, that I have 'had doubts; but I ſee I have been to 'blame with regard to the latter. Has 'Mr. Damer ſhewn you his father's 'letters, Miſs?'

'Shewn them to me!' repeated Henrietta, 'no—but ſure—dear Mrs. Willis, 'explain yourſelf—I am ready to ſink 'with the apprehenſions you have raiſed 'in my mind.'

'Compoſe yourſelf, my dear,' ſaid Mrs. Willis, drawing her chair nearer to her, and taking her hand tenderly. 'I 'mean you well; be aſſured I do: and 'now I will tell you all that has been 'upon my mind for ſeveral days paſt. 'Never did I imagine that I ſhould en-'tertain unfavourable ſuſpicions of the 'ſon of my benefactor; but indeed, my 'dear Miſs, I am afraid he has not acted 'ingenuouſly with you.'

That moment a loud knocking at the door interrupted Mrs. Willis. She ſtarted from her chair. 'Who can this 'be?' ſaid ſhe, in ſome ſurprize; 'I will 'go and ſee.' She ran haſtily out of the room; but returning again inſtantly, 'Poſſibly,' ſaid ſhe, 'it may be Mr. 'Damer: remember, Miſs, that it is my 'advice to you, not to leave my houſe, 'if he ſhould deſire you, at leaſt till you 'have heard what I have to ſay.'

She uttered theſe words with extreme earneſtneſs and concern, and went immediately down ſtairs, leaving Henrietta in an agony of doubt, anxiety, and aſtoniſhment.

Her ſurprize kept her motionleſs in her chair, till ſhe was rouſed by the voice of a woman upon the ſtairs that led to her apartment, whom ſhe heard ſay, with great

great haughtineſs of accent—'No, there 'is no occaſion for that ceremony; I, 'ſhall go in without introduction, I 'aſſure you.'

She ſuddenly ſtarted from her chair, and was going towards the door, when ſhe ſaw it flung open with ſome violence, and a lady of a very diſagreeable figure, but richly dreſſed, and in the utmoſt extremity of the faſhion, appear at the entrance.

Miſs Courteney, recovering a little from her ſurprize, looked at the lady, in order to recollect whether ſhe had ever ſeen her before; but, being wholly unacquainted with her features, and obſerving that ſhe ſtood ſtill and gazed at her without ſpeaking, ſhe concluded the viſit could not be deſigned for her.

'I fancy, Madam,' ſaid ſhe, approaching her, 'you are miſtaken; I am not 'the perſon you ſeek.'

'No, *Madam*,' returned the lady with an emphaſis, 'I am not miſtaken;' then throwing herſelf haughtily into a chair, 'I ſhall not aſk your leave,' ſaid ſhe, with a malignant ſmile, 'to ſit down 'in this apartment; I may take that li-'berty with what belongs to Mr. Damer. 'Do you know me, pray, *Madam*?'

'Not I, truly,' replied Miſs Courteney, indignation at this inſolent treatment having baniſhed her former terror and ſurprize; and ſeating herſelf, with a careleſs air, juſt oppoſite to her, 'Pray 'let me know what is your buſineſs with 'me,' ſaid ſhe.

'Pert creature!' ſaid the ſtranger, affecting contempt, while her lips quivered with rage, and her whole frame ſeemed convulſed with the violence of her emotions: 'What! you would have me un-'derſtand you to be a woman of for-'tune, would you not? Upon my word,' ſaid ſhe, looking round her, 'this is a 'very handſome apartment. Your dreſ-'ſing-room, forſooth! You have your 'forms, no doubt, and receive company 'in your dreſſing-room in a morning. 'A very genteel diſhabille, too; and 'your face varniſhed over ſo nicely! 'Who would not conclude that white 'and red to be natural?'

'You are come here to inſult me, I 'find,' ſaid Henrietta, her fine face glowing with indignation, 'I cannot 'imagine what cauſe I have given you 'for this ſtrange rudeneſs. I never, as 'I can remember, ſaw you before; and 'inſiſt upon your quitting my apartment. 'You can have no buſineſs with me, I 'am ſure.'

'Indeed but I have, minx,' ſaid the ſtranger, with the pale rage of a fury; 'and my buſineſs is to turn you out of 'this apartment: my fortune ſhall not 'be waſted in ſupporting ſuch wretches.'

'Your fortune!' cried Miſs Courteney, in aſtoniſhment: 'what have I to 'do with you, or your fortune? Who 'are you?'

This moment Mrs. Willis entered the room: 'Excuſe me, ladies,' ſaid ſhe; 'I heard high words between you.'

'Ladies!' interrupted the ſtranger: 'how dare you, woman, join me with 'ſuch a creature! What buſineſs have 'you to intrude?'

'Madam,' replied Mrs. Willis, 'I 'came to inform this young lady, my 'boarder, who you are: ſhe does not 'know you.—Miſs, this is young Mr. 'Damer's lady.'

'What!' cried Henrietta, in the utmoſt aſtoniſhment, 'is Mr. Damer mar-'ried?'

'Oh—you are ſurprized, then,' ſaid the lady, with a ſneer: 'diſappointed 'too, perhaps. You had the confidence, I 'ſuppoſe, to think he would have married 'you one of theſe days! Tell me, you 'wicked thing, did he ever give you 'ſuch hopes? Oh, I could tear his eyes 'out!' ſaid ſhe, riſing, and walking about the room like one frantick, while the enormous length of her negligee ſwept the room, like the train of a tragedy-queen. 'A wretch, to uſe me thus! 'Me, who have brought him ſuch a for-'tune!—But I'll be revenged: he ſhall 'never have a quiet moment; I'll make 'him know what it is to ſlight a woman 'of virtue.'

All this time Henrietta continued ſilent, rooted in her chair, and with difficulty reſtrained the anguiſh of her heart from riſing to her eyes, leſt this outrageous woman of virtue ſhould exult in her diſtreſs: yet ſhe ſaw that ſhe was betrayed; that Mr. Damer had acted weakly, if not baſely: her reputation was ruined, yet ſhe would not ſtoop ſo low as to enter into any juſtification of herſelf to a woman who had treated her ſo cruelly, upon a bare ſuſpicion. The pride of affronted virtue came to her aid, againſt that torrent of overwhelming grief which had for ſome moments abſorbed

ſorbed all her faculties: ſhe roſe from her chair, and approaching Mrs. Damer—

'The error you are in,' ſaid ſhe, 'would have moved my compaſſion, had 'you treated me with leſs inſolence. I 'ſcorn to undeceive you. Go, learn 'from your huſband who I am; and 'bluſh, if you can, for the injurious lan-'guage you have given a perſon as much 'your ſuperior by birth, as in that vir-'tue perhaps of which you boaſt, and which has not withheld you from ſuch 'indecent tranſports of jealouſy, as it 'would become a virtuous woman to 'ſuppreſs.'

The ſuperiority with which ſhe ſpoke, the dignity of her air and manner, ſtruck her mean-ſouled adverſary with ſuch awe, that ſhe continued ſilent for ſome moments, with her haggard looks fixed on her. Envy, at the view of ſo lovely a form, added new ſtings to her rage and jealouſy. At length, ſhe poured forth a torrent of reproaches, with ſuch eagerneſs of malice, that her words were ſcarce intelligible.

'I am not uſed to ſcolding,' ſaid Miſs Courteney, calmly, retiring towards her bed-chamber; 'and you, 'Mrs. Damer, ſeem to be an excellent 'ſcold.'

The lady, provoked at this appellation, employed the coarſeſt language imaginable to expreſs her reſentment of the injury; but Miſs Courteney took ſhelter in her bed-chamber, the door of which ſhe double-locked.

'Inſolent trollop!' ſaid Mrs. Damer, raiſing her voice that ſhe might hear her; 'call me ſcold! I ſcorn your words, you 'ſaucy, impudent, audacious huſſey: I 'never could ſcold in my life—no, you 'dirty puſs—I am a woman of breed-'ing; I am none of your beggarly qua-'lity: I had forty thouſand pounds to 'my portion, you proud, paltry minx.—'Scold! call me a ſcold——'

'Pray, Madam, compoſe yourſelf,' ſaid Mrs. Willis, 'and do me the fa-'vour to walk down into my parlour. 'Here is ſome miſtake. I am pretty 'certain you have injured this young 'lady by your ſuſpicions.'

'Young lady!' interrupted Mrs. Damer, 'what makes her a lady?—'A fine world it is, now-a-days, when 'beggars are called ladies. I would 'fain know what fortune ſhe has to put 'her upon a footing with ladies.'

'I know nothing of her fortune, 'Madam,' ſaid Mrs. Willis.

'Fortune! poor wretch!' ſaid Mrs. Damer: 'a few paltry hundreds. Such 'ladies! Suppoſe her grandfather was 'an earl, has ſhe a fortune? Anſwer me 'that.'

'I don't know, really,' replied Mrs. Willis. 'Well, then,' ſaid Mrs. Damer, 'why do you give her a title ſhe 'has no right to?—But why do I talk 'to you, vile wretch? you are my huſ-'band's confident.'

This thought renewed all her rage, and ſhe loaded Mrs. Willis with ſuch ſhocking invectives, that the poor woman could not refrain from tears.

'Your huſband's father, Madam,' ſaid ſhe, 'has been a generous bene-'factor to me: I conſider that, and will 'be patient under your abuſe.'

The word *abuſe* was ſuch a charge upon this lady's want of breeding, that ſhe called Mrs. Willis a hundred ſaucy jades, for daring to ſay that ſhe was capable of abuſing any body; and having almoſt exhauſted her ſpirits with the violence of her paſſions, and finding that Mrs. Willis ſat ſilent, and took no farther notice of what ſhe ſaid, ſhe flounced out of the room, declaring, that her father-in-law ſhould know that ſhe acted as procureſs for his ſon, and that ſhe ſhould return to her rags and poverty again.

Mrs. Willis thought her behaviour diſpenſed with her from treating her with that reſpect which ſhe would have otherwiſe paid to Mr. Damer's daughter-in-law, and therefore did not offer to wait on her down ſtairs, but rung the bell for ſomebody to attend her; and, locking the door after her, ſhe tapped gently at Miſs Courteney's chamber-door, telling her that Mrs. Damer was gone.

'Who is this fury?' ſaid the young lady, as ſhe came out. 'You have 'been treated very ill by her, Mrs. Wil-'lis; I am ſorry for it.'—'And I am 'ſorry for what you have ſuffered, my 'dear Miſs,' replied Mrs. Willis; 'but 'Mr. Damer is to blame for it all. I am 'now ſure you are entirely innocent.'

'Innocent!' repeated Miſs Courteney, with a ſigh. 'How low am I fal-'len, when that could ever be doubted! 'But, Mrs. Willis, you knew, it ſeems, 'that Mr. Damer was married; I am 'ſurprized you never mentioned his wife 'to me.'

'And

'And are you not surprized, Miss,' said Mrs. Willis, 'that Mr. Damer 'never mentioned her to you?'

'To be sure that is very strange,' replied Henrietta; 'what could he mean 'by it?'

'Ah! Miss,' said Mrs. Willis, 'a 'very little reflection on Mr. Damer's 'behaviour might have informed you 'that he is in love with you.'

'In love with me!' cried Henrietta, blushing with shame and resentment.

'Yes,' said Mrs. Willis, 'in love 'with you; if that can be called love 'which seeks the ruin of it's object. I 'saw it in his looks, his words, cautious 'as they were; his whole behaviour 'shewed it but too plainly.'

'And this man married too!' cried Henrietta, lifting up her eyes. 'To 'what have I, by one rash step, reduced 'myself! But still, Mrs. Willis, my first 'difficulty recurs, why did you avoid 'speaking of his wife to me?'

'Hear me, my dear, with patience,' interrupted Mrs. Willis: 'I shall be very 'free; but my plainness ought not to 'offend you, since it is a mark of my 'sincerity.' Mrs. Willis paused here a moment, and then proceeded, as will be found in the following chapter.

CHAP. XV.

IN WHICH THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES ARE PARTLY EXPLAINED.

'YOU may remember I told you, 'soon after you came here, that 'before I went to Leghorn, I heard Mr. 'Damer was courting the daughter of a 'rich citizen: I had been returned but 'three or four days, when he came to 'me to know if I could accommodate a 'young lady, a ward of his father's, 'with lodging and board; to which I 'readily consented.

'It is no flattery, Miss, to tell you 'that, when I saw you, I was charmed 'with your person and behaviour: your 'beauty, and Mr. Damer's extreme 'assiduity, made it seem highly probable 'that he loved you. I set myself to 'examine his behaviour, and the ob-'servations I made on it confirmed my 'suspicions. I had then heard nothing 'of his being married, having upon my 'return been so taken up with my do-'mestick affairs, that I had no leisure 'to make or receive visits, from which 'I could receive any information con-'cerning what had happened in my ab-'sence.

'I was a little surprized to find that 'you had been introduced to me under 'a feigned name, and that you were not 'called Benson, but Courteney. How-'ever, I made no reflections upon that 'circumstance, till, about two days af-'terwards, I accidentally heard that 'Mr. Damer had been married two 'months; then it was that, in my asto-'nishment at his so cautiously avoiding 'any mention of his wife, I was led to 'reflect upon what you yourself had in-'formed me of your situation; your 'flight from your friends, Mr. Damer's 'apparent tenderness for you, awakened 'suspicions, I own it, disadvantageous 'to you.

'I waited impatiently for the hour of 'Mr. Damer's visiting you, and the 'moment I saw him, wished him joy on 'his marriage, expressing my surprize 'that I should not have heard of that 'event from himself. He coloured, and 'seemed in great confusion; and, after 'a little pause—"Have you said any "thing of it to Miss Courteney?" said 'he.

'I replied, that I had heard the news 'but an hour before, and had not seen 'you since.

"You will oblige me," said he, "if "you will not mention it to her." I 'stared. "My wife," continued he, "is the most unreasonable woman in the "world; she has taken it into her head "to be horribly jealous of me, though "we have been married so short a time. "It was a match (and he sighed) of my "father's making—but I assure you I "am very unhappy."

"I am sorry for it, Sir," interrupted I; "but what reasons have you for con-"cealing from Miss Courteney that you "are married?"

"It is a sad thing, Mrs. Willis," 'said he, "when a man is not master "in his own family."—"I hope that "is not your case, Sir," answered I. "Indeed but it is," he replied. "Miss "Courteney, you know, is agreeable." —"Oh! very agreeable," said I. "My "wife is of such an unaccountable hu-"mour," resumed he, "that I durst "not offer Miss Courteney, though my "father is her guardian, an asylum in "my house, till her relations were re-

" conciled to her, leſt I ſhould be teazed " with jealouſy and ſuſpicions."

" I am perſuaded, Sir," ſaid I, " that " Miſs Courteney has too much good " ſenſe to take it amiſs that you did not " invite her to your houſe, as things " were circumſtanced. She has more " reaſon to be diſpleaſed at your con- " cealing your marriage from her, which " every body knows, and which ſhe " would ſoon know if ſhe lived leſs re- " tired."

" Let me entreat you, Mrs. Willis," ſaid he, " not to mention it to Miſs " Courteney. I would not upon any " account that ſhe ſhould know I am " married, yet could not offer her an " apartment in my houſe."

" Indeed, Sir," ſaid I, ſmiling, " you " make this matter of more conſequence " than you need to do; Miſs Courte- " ney will not conſider it as any ſlight " to her."

" She muſt either think herſelf ſlight- " ed," reſumed he, with quickneſs, " by my not inviting her, or ſhe will " divine the reaſon, which would be " worſe; for in that caſe her delicacy is " ſo extreme, that ſhe would never allow " me to ſee her."

" Ah," thought I, " is it ſo!" He per- ceived he had almoſt betrayed himſelf; and changed the diſcourſe, aſking me many queſtions about my huſband, whoſe diligence and fidelity he highly extolled, dropping hints of deſigns in his favour; and indeed it is in his power to be of great ſervice to him.

' But I had no ſatisfaction,' purſued Mrs. Willis, ' in what he ſaid; for, to my apprehenſion, it appeared as if he ſought to bribe me into a concurrence with his deſigns, whatever they were. Therefore I ſat ſilent, and I believe diſcovered by my looks, that I did not like his proceedings; for he roſe up, and, with an air of ſome reſent- ment, ſaid,

' That his father would be in town in a few days, and would then diſpoſe of you properly; and that in the mean time he muſt inſiſt upon my being ſilent with regard to his marriage, ſince it would throw him into great confuſion if you knew it; and added, that he thought he might reaſonably expect this inſtance of my complai- ſance.'

' I told him that I was very glad to hear his father would be in town ſo ſoon, and would take the young lady under his own care: that, ſince he de- ſired it, I would not be the firſt to ac- quaint you with his marriage. I owned his reaſons appeared to me very whim- ſical; but that it was not my buſineſs to be impertinently curious; and that I ſhould concern myſelf no farther about it.

' He ſeemed pleaſed with this indif- ference, and went up ſtairs to ſee you. I had already taken my reſolution, my dear Miſs Courteney, which was to write to his father, and acquaint him with the whole tranſaction. I was willing to leave the young gentleman in a falſe ſecurity, that he might not ſuſpect my deſign, and take meaſures to render it uſeleſs; and not being ſure how far even you might be truſted, for my ſuſpicions of you, though weakened, were not yet removed, I thought it beſt to ſay nothing that could alarm you, till I had received the old gentleman's advice how to act; but my meaſures were broke by Mr. Damer's reſolving to take you from my houſe.

' He came into the parlour to me to- day, before you ſaw him, and told me, that he had directions from his father to ſend you into the country, be- cauſe he did not expect to return for ſome time yet, and he did not approve of your reſiding in London till he came.

' You may eaſily imagine, Miſs, that I was not ſatisfied with the cauſe he aſſigned for this ſudden reſolution. I was now alarmed for you; and judged it neceſſary to acquaint you imme- diately with Mr. Damer's being mar- ried, that you might not fall igno- rantly into his ſnares. I began with aſking you queſtions, to which the openneſs and ſimplicity of your an- ſwers convinced me that you were im- poſed upon greatly by Mr. Damer. I was going to explain myſelf clearly, when Mrs. Damer's arrival interrupt- ed me. You know with what ear- neſtneſs I intreated you not to leave my houſe; I was apprehenſive that he was come to hurry you away, and I trembled for the danger to which you were expoſed.

' When I left you, I met Mrs. Da- mer upon the ſtairs; and, not know- ing her, I aſked who it was ſhe deſired to ſee?—" The young woman that " lodges with you," ſaid ſhe, in a

' tone

'tone of voice that surprized me. I 'told her, I would go and acquaint you 'that there was a lady wanted to speak 'to you: but she rushed by me, saying, "There is no need of that ceremony, I "shall introduce myself."

'Her behaviour recalling to my mind 'what Mr. Damer had said of his wife's 'jealousy, I suspected this was the lady; 'and, to be assured, I enquired of a 'servant, who attended her, who she 'was. The moment I knew it was 'really her, I flew up stairs, being full 'of concern for you; for I saw a storm 'in her countenance, and dreaded the 'consequence. The poor young man 'is indeed plagued with a jealous wife; 'and in that particular he told the truth. 'But, my dear Miss, I see plainly that 'the mystery he has made of his con-'nections with you has rouzed her suspi-'cions.'

'It is all an incomprehensible my-'stery to me,' said Henrietta, sighing: 'Mr. Damer has certainly deceived me, 'for what purposes I know not; but I 'know that I will never see him again, 'but in the presence of his father, to have 'this dark affair cleared up.

'But, my dear Mrs. Willis, how 'shall I express what my heart feels for 'you, who have shewn so tender a regard 'for my honour and quiet! How mise-'rable might I have been, had you been 'less good! I am sure I may rely upon 'your prudence. Advise me, then, what 'to do: you know my story; you see 'my present situation. I have no friend, 'no protector.'

'My dear Miss,' interrupted Mrs. Willis, 'there is but one thing for you 'to do, and that is, to return to your 'aunt.'

'How can I appear before her,' said Henrietta, 'after having so greatly dis-'obliged her by my flight; a flight 'which has had such disgraceful con-'sequences? Besides, do not the same 'motives that obliged me to leave her, 'still subsist? and are they not equally 'strong against my returning?'

'I would not pain you, my dear 'Miss,' said Mrs. Willis, 'with the 'recollection of a past error, were it not 'to make it useful to you in your present 'circumstances. Warned as you were 'of your aunt's designs, it was impos-'sible to carry them into execution 'without your concurrence: your flight 'therefore was not necessary; and, if 'not necessary, surely it was highly im-'prudent; and, in my opinion, can only 'be repaired by a voluntary return. 'Need I tell a young lady of your de-'licacy, that imputations, however un-'just, sully, if they do not stain a cha-'racter? Do you think this woman's 'frantick jealousy will be silent? How 'can you otherwise prove the falsehood of 'her assertions, than by returning to 'your aunt, and making yourself ac-'countable to her for all your actions? 'Nothing can be more unfortunate for 'youth and beauty, than to be left to 'it's own guidance and discretion. The 'world seldom attributes too much pru-'dence to youth: however regular our 'conduct may be in that gay time of 'life, it is supposed to be owing to the 'care and attention of our parents or 'relations, rather than to our own cir-'cumspection. Can a young woman, 'who voluntarily sets herself free from 'that restraint, hope to escape unfa-'vourable censures, when those who 'owe it to chance only that they are not 'subjected to any controul, suffer perhaps 'in the opinion of the world, because 'they are possessed of a liberty which 'they may make an improper use of?

'You see, my dear, to what incon-'veniencies you have been exposed; 'these are the necessary consequences of 'your unprotected state: there is no 'doubt but you would repel every at-'tempt to the prejudice of your honour; 'but does not modesty, if not virtue, 'suffer by such attempts? and can you 'acquit yourself of imprudence, when 'you reflect that you have thrown your-'self into a situation which renders you 'liable to them?'

'It was indeed,' said Henrietta, who, by her blushes and confusion, acknow-ledged the strength of her reasons, 'im-'prudence to throw myself into this 'situation, but it would be guilt to con-'tinue in it. Oh! that I had had such 'a friend as you to advise with at Wind-'sor, I should never have taken a step, 'which I blush to think of now. I will 'return to my aunt, Mrs. Willis; I 'will throw myself upon her mercy; 'and if I must be made a sacrifice of—'

'Indeed, my dear,' interrupted Mrs. Willis, 'these fears are groundless: you 'cannot possibly be married against your 'own consent; and you have it always 'in your power to refuse. As for the 'convent, you cannot be cheated into

'it, that is certain, since you know she 'had such a design, and may guard 'against it.'

'But suppose,' said Miss Courteney, 'that she should not receive me again? 'Mr. Damer found her inexorable.'

'Ah! my dear,' replied Mrs. Willis, shaking her head, 'Mr. Damer was not 'a fit person to be trusted with such a 'negotiation: but, however that may be, 'I am sure, when your aunt knows in 'what manner he has acted, and the 'reasons you have to distrust him, she 'will think it necessary to take you out 'of his hands. Your return to her will 'remove her suspicions against you, and 'convince her that it was from a sud-'den impulse of fear only, that you left 'her; and that you had no desire of dis-'posing of yourself contrary to her in-'clinations.'

'But I have one favour to beg of you,' said Miss Courteney, 'and that is, that 'you will go along with me to my aunt; 'resentment may shut her ears to all that 'I can say to her, but I think she can-'not resist your pleas, urged with that 'good sense you possess in so high a de-'gree.'

'Doubt not, my dear,' said Mrs. Willis, 'but I am ready to do you any 'service in my power.'

'What hinders us then from going 'directly?' cried Henrietta, eagerly; 'we can get a post-chaise, and——'

'The day is too far advanced,' replied Mrs. Willis; 'we will, if you 'please, set out early to-morrow morn-'ing; I will take care to have a post-'chaise in readiness: in the mean time, 'you may depend upon being secure 'from any disagreeable visits here; 'neither Mr. Damer nor his fury of a 'wife shall see you, unless you desire 'they should.'

'Notwithstanding the treatment she 'gave me,' said Miss Courteney, 'I 'would rather see her than him; but you 'may well imagine, Mrs. Willis, that 'I do not wish to see either of them.'

'Make yourself easy, my dear,' said Mrs. Willis; 'you shall meet with no 'insult of any kind in my house.'

Henrietta embraced her with tears of gratitude, which the good woman returned with true maternal tenderness, and then left her, to give the necessary directions for their little journey the next day.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

HENRIETTA.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

BOOK THE THIRD.

CHAP. I.

IN WHICH OUR HEROINE MEETS WITH A NEW DISAPPOINTMENT, AND SOME FARTHER INSTANCES OF MISS WOODBY'S FRIENDSHIP.

HENRIETTA, being now left to her own reflections, beheld her late conduct in a light in which it had never appeared to her before; the ſenſe of blame ſo juſtly incurred, filled her with remorſe and ſhame. Hitherto ſhe had induſtriouſly aggravated the cauſe of her fears, that ſhe might not ſtand ſelf-condemned; which, to an ingenuous mind, is of all others the greateſt evil: but Mrs. Willis had ſtated her caſe too juſtly.

What force could give her unwilling hand to the old baronet? How could ſhe be cheated into a convent, when ſhe was forewarned of the deſign? From her obſtinate oppoſition to her aunt's will, nothing worſe could have happened than the loſs of her favour and protection, which by her flight ſhe had anticipated. She now wondered at the unreaſonableneſs of her fears, and looked back with the deepeſt regret upon the errors they had occaſioned.

Theſe melancholy thoughts, and her anxiety about the reception her aunt would give her, kept her waking almoſt the whole night. As ſoon as it was light, ſhe roſe, and dreſſed herſelf, impatient to be gone. Mrs. Willis, at her ſummons, made haſte to join her: and, when they had breakfaſted, ſet out immediately upon their journey; Henrietta full of perturbation and inquietude, Mrs. Willis with that ſerenity which attends the conſciouſneſs of doing what is right.

The young lady, as ſhe drew nearer her aunt's dwelling, found her emotions increaſe: one while her imagination repreſented Lady Meadows as kind and indulgent, ready to forgive her error, and to reſtore her to her affection; and, immediately after, ſhe would tremble with the apprehenſion of her ſevere reproaches.

Mrs. Willis perceived her uneaſineſs, and uſed her utmoſt endeavours to compoſe her: but when the chaiſe ſtopped at the door, ſhe was near falling into a fainting fit; and her friend was obliged to aſk if Lady Meadows was at home, for Henrietta was not able to ſpeak.

The ſervant-maid who opened the door having got a glimpſe of the young lady as ſhe ſat in the chaiſe, eagerly flew to the ſide of it. 'O my dear Miſs!' ſaid ſhe, in a tranſport of joy, 'is it you?'

'How do you do, Jenny?' ſaid Miſs Courteney; and, trembling, added, 'is 'my aunt at home?'

'My lady,' ſaid the girl, 'ſet out 'two days ago for her ſeat in Devon-'ſhire. Oh! Miſs, here has been ſad

'doings!

'doings! Poor Mrs. White is turned 'away: there came an ugly miſchief-'making lady from London, and told 'my lady a heap of ſtories about you, 'and ſo Mrs. White was turned away. 'But won't you pleaſe to alight, Miſs?'

Henrietta looked at Mrs. Willis, for ſhe knew not herſelf what to reſolve on, the news ſhe had heard having thrown her into the utmoſt perplexity. 'I wiſh 'we could ſee Mrs. White,' ſaid Mrs. Willis to her in a whiſper.

Miſs Courteney immediately enquired of the maid, how long Mrs. White had left her aunt, and where ſhe was to be found? The girl told her ſhe had been gone above a week, and that ſhe believed ſhe was at her ſiſter's in Windſor. Henrietta had often heard her mention her ſiſter, who was married to a tradeſman in Windſor; and, after ſhe had taken leave of the poor affectionate girl, who wept to ſee her depart again, ſhe gave the poſt-boy directions where to drive.

Mrs. White, when the chaiſe ſtopped at the door, heard from a little parlour where ſhe was ſitting the voice of Miſs Courteney enquiring for her, and flew with trembling eagerneſs to meet her.

'Oh! Miſs,' ſaid ſhe, taking her hand, and leading her into the room, 'I am 'rejoiced to ſee you: where have you 'been all this time? What an unfor-'tunate creature was I to be the means 'of your taking ſuch a raſh reſolution! 'Oh that I had kept what I knew to 'myſelf! But, ſurely, it was very un-'kind in you not to acquaint me with 'your deſign, nor to aſk my advice; I 'might have prevented all this trouble. 'But, thank Heaven, you are ſafe and 'well—well I ſee you are.'

Henrietta then interrupting the good woman, who, between chiding and fondneſs, had taken no notice of Mrs. Willis, —'That I am ſafe,' ſaid ſhe, 'I am 'obliged to this gentlewoman; for ſome 'ſtrange treachery was preparing for me, 'I believe, but her care has prevented 'it.'

'Treachery!' interrupted Mrs. White—'Aye, you have met with 'enough of that, I ſuppoſe: there was 'your new-found friend and acquain-'tance, Miſs—I forget her name, whom 'you told all your ſecrets to; you made 'no ſcruple to truſt her, Miſs, though 'you was ſo reſerved to me; ſhe was 'the occaſion of my loſing my place. 'Ah! Miſs—but I will not upbraid 'you; I ſee you are concerned: God 'forbid I ſhould add to your uneaſineſs; 'I have ſuffered greatly upon your ac-'count. It was very unkind in you to 'put it in the power of a ſtranger to do 'me ſo much miſchief: ſurely, I did not 'deſerve ſuch a return from you. But, 'God knows my heart, I would not up-'braid you for the world; no, I ſcorn 'it; but I have been the greateſt ſuf-'ferer, I am ſure, and yet I meant well.'

'Was not the lady's name Woodby?' interrupted Henrietta, impatient to hear the particulars of this new act of treachery and baſeneſs.

'Aye, Woodby,' replied Mrs. White, 'a diſagreeable creature as ever my 'eyes beheld. I ſhall never forget how 'ſhe ſidled into my lady's dreſſing-room, 'and, half out of breath, told her, ſhe 'had taken the liberty to wait on her 'to bring her ſome news of her niece. 'I could not hear diſtinctly all ſhe ſaid, 'for my lady ordered me to withdraw; 'but I put my ear to the key-hole, as 'I had done once before for your ſer-'vice, Miſs, which I have reaſon to re-'pent, Heaven knows!—but what is paſt 'cannot be helped—it is not my way to '*rip* up things that are paſt.'

'Well,' ſaid Henrietta, 'but what 'did you hear?'

'Nay, for that matter,' reſumed Mrs. White, 'I may draw myſelf into another '*premune* perhaps: after what I have 'ſuffered, I ought to be cautious; but I 'love you, Miſs, and muſt tell you every 'thing, whatever it coſt me, and that 'you have experienced already. Well, 'ſhe made up a horrible ſtory, that you 'had gone away ſuddenly from lodg-'ings where ſhe viſited you; and, not-'withſtanding the friendſhip there was 'between you, (and a great clutter ſhe 'made with that word) you went away 'without giving her any notice of your 'intention; and this ſhe ſaid had a 'ſtrange appearance.'

Miſs Courteney lifted up her eyes here, in aſtoniſhment at what ſhe heard.

'As for me,' continued Mrs. White, 'ſhe did my buſineſs in an inſtant; for, 'as ſoon as ſhe was gone, my lady ſent 'for me, and, in a violent rage, told 'me I ſhould not ſtay another night in 'her houſe. She was informed, ſhe 'ſaid, that I had been the cauſe of your 'running away, by filling your head 'with notions of her deſigning to con-'fine you in a convent. She would

'hear

'hear nothing that I could say in my 'own defence; and dismissed me that 'very evening.'

'I am excessively sorry,' said Henrietta, 'that you should suffer so much 'on my account. It was indeed very 'imprudent in me to be so communica-'tive to Miss Woodby, but I could not 'imagine she was capable of so much 'treachery.'

'But how have you been able to con-'ceal yourself so well, Miss, from the 'enquiries of all your friends?' said Mrs. White. 'Mr. Damer, it seems, 'your guardian's son, knew not where 'to find you.'

'Did Mr. Damer say, he knew not 'where I was?' cried Miss Courteney, in astonishment.

'He told Mr. Danvers so,' replied Mrs. White, 'who went several times, by 'my lady's orders, to enquire for you.'

'Was there ever such complicated 'treachery!' said Henrietta, looking at Mrs. Willis, with tears in her eyes. 'Well, my dear,' said the good woman, 'there is at least this advantage in 'misfortunes, that they bring us at last 'to wisdom. You will for the future 'be more cautious how you engage in 'such perilous enterprizes.'

'Aye, Miss,' said Mrs. White, 'and 'how you trust false friends to the pre-'judice of your true ones. You see 'what it has cost me.—But no more of 'that—I can forget and forgive.'

'Well, and what is now to be done?' said Miss Courteney, folding her hands with an air of despondence.

'It is easy to answer that question,' said Mrs. Willis; 'you must write to 'your aunt, my dear, and give her an 'account of all that has happened to you. 'There is certainly something to con-'demn in what you have done; but in 'what you have suffered, there is much 'to be pitied. I am persuaded her ten-'derness will silence her resentment. I 'hoped to have left you with your aunt, 'Miss,' continued Mrs. Willis; 'but 'since that cannot be, you will return 'with me, I suppose.'

'To be sure I will,' said Miss Courteney; 'with whom, in my present situ-'ation, can I be so happy as with you?'

Mrs. White desired she might be permitted to come and see her: to which Henrietta readily consented; promising, if she was reconciled to her aunt, to use her utmost endeavours to reinstate her in her place.

CHAP. II.

WHICH THROWS NEW LIGHTS UPON MR. DAMER'S BEHAVIOUR, AND CONTAINS A VERY IMPROVING CONVERSATION.

THE two ladies being again seated in their post-chaise, Mrs. Willis kindly applied herself to comfort her fair companion, whose affecting silence shewed a deeper sense of her new disappointment than any words could express. However, Miss Courteney felt in reality fewer perturbations and less anxiety in her return, than when she began her journey. So true it is, that, when we hope little, we fear little likewise.

She now looked upon her aunt's affection as irrecoverable; Miss Woodby's vile insinuations had strengthened her suspicions; Mr. Damer, when he found himself detected, would doubtless account for his behaviour in a manner unfavourable to her; her unhappy flight had given such a colour to her succeeding actions, as rendered any justification of herself hopeless; and the insidious chaplain might now with ease confirm those prejudices he had raised.

In this manner she reasoned herself into a belief that her misfortune was irremediable: despair, as an ingenious writer observes, being that ease to the mind which mortification is to the flesh. Henrietta found some relief in being freed from that vicissitude of hopes and fears which had so long held her mind in the most racking suspence; and, with a kind of gloomy satisfaction, resigned herself to all the bitterness of her fate.

Mrs. Willis, who knew not the peculiarities of Lady Meadows's temper, or, if she had, would not perhaps have considered, that obstinate people are ever most obstinate in error, thought all things might be set right again, by Miss Courteney's giving a candid narrative of what had happened to her since her leaving her; she therefore pressed the young lady to delay writing to her aunt no longer than the next day.

'There are some cases,' said Mrs. Willis to her, when she saw her sitting down to write, 'in which simplicity is

'the

'the greatest refinement of art; yours 'is one of them: be as simple and in- 'genuous as you can in the account you 'give your aunt, and let the facts speak 'for themselves.'

Henrietta followed her advice, and related every part of her conduct since she had left her, and the treachery and deceit that had been used towards her, with the utmost plainness and sincerity; and saw that she had made her letter more affecting by it's simplicity, than she could have done by the nicest touches of art. Mrs. Willis read it, and approved of it; and it was immediately dispatched to the post.

Scarce was this little affair over, when Mr. Damer sent in his name.

'I like this piece of ceremony,' said Mrs. Willis; 'it looks as if the man 'was ashamed of what he has done: do 'you chuse to see him, Miss?'

'Oh! no,' replied Henrietta; 'it 'would be strange, indeed, if I was 'willing to see a man whom you suspect 'of having such shocking designs, and 'who I am sure has not acted honestly.'

'Well, then,' said Mrs. Willis, 'I 'will go down to him, and hear what 'he has to say.'

She returned again in less than an hour, smiling. 'This young man,' said she, 'does not want sense. What 'would you say, Miss, if I was to tell 'you that he has persuaded me he has 'acted very right, and with the best in- 'tentions in the world?'

'I should say, that I am less unhappy 'than I thought I was,' replied Miss Courteney; 'for surely it is a great mis- 'fortune to meet with persons who abuse 'our confidence and the good opinions 'we have of them.'

'That misfortune,' said Mrs. Willis, 'will in time become so common, that 'you will feel it less sensibly than you 'do now. The only way to avoid be- 'ing deceived, is to be always upon 'your guard against deceit.'

'That is to say, I must be always 'suspicious,' said Henrietta: 'this may 'be a very prudent maxim, but my heart 'disavows it.'

'Alas! my dear,' replied Mrs. Willis, 'we all enter upon the world with 'high notions of disinterestedness, friend- 'ship, sincerity, and candour: but ex- 'perience shows us, that these qualities 'exist not, or among so very few, that 'it does not fall to the lot of one mortal 'in a thousand to meet with them in 'those we contract friendships with. The 'frequent disappointments we suffer in 'the search of them, make suspicion 'grow into a habit of thinking, which, 'if it lessens our enjoyments, lessens our 'inconveniencies likewise.'

'Then I,' said Miss Courteney, 'shall 'be always exposed to inconveniencies; 'for I am sure I can never bring myself 'to suspect persons who appear deserv- 'ing of my good opinion: and indeed 'I think it is more honourable to be of- 'ten deceived, than to be always doubt- 'ing.'

'But it is not so safe,' replied Mrs. Willis, smiling: 'however, my dear, 'in unexperienced youth like yours, this 'way of thinking is meritorious; the 'faults of the world can only be learned, 'by a long acquaintance with it, and 'by suffering from that acquaintance. 'Those who derive this kind of know- 'ledge from the heart rather than the 'head, are indeed safe themselves, but 'dangerous to all others.

'But I will keep you no longer in 'suspence with regard to Mr. Damer. 'He has glossed over his behaviour so 'as to make me appear satisfied with it; 'which indeed it is necessary I should, 'if I would not wish to make an enemy 'of him; and a very powerful one he 'might be to my husband.

'He asked for you as soon as he saw 'me, and did not seem surprized at the 'very slight excuse I made for your not 'seeing him. He expressed great con- 'cern for the treatment you had received 'from his wife; for, in her frantick rage, 'it seems she told him all that had passed 'between you.'

"You find," said he, "I did not "exaggerate my wife's failing."

"It is a great misfortune," replied I; "but, Sir, I think, if you had not made "a secret of your connections with Miss "Courteney, Mrs. Damer's jealousy "would not have had so plausible an "excuse, nor would the young lady have "had any reason to complain of you."

"I should have found it absolutely "impossible," said he, "to have con- "cerned myself in Miss Courteney's "affairs, or be of the least use to her, "had my wife known any thing of the "matter; the very sight of Miss Cour- "teney would have rouzed her suspi- "cions,

" cions, and have put it out of my " power to act either as a friend or guar- " dian by her; and, in her unhappy " situation, she had great need of my " care and attention."

" However, Sir," replied I, " it was " certainly ill-judged to conceal from " Miss Courteney that you was mar- " ried: what must she think of such a " strange conduct?"

" Why, Mrs. Willis," resumed he, " I have already told you, that I could " not own my marriage to Miss Cour- " teney, without letting her into my " reasons for not being able to offer her " an asylum in my house during her " aunt's displeasure, an offer she had " great reason to expect. I was un- " willing to expose my wife's foible, " and to raise scruples in the young " lady's mind, which might prevent " her from receiving those little services " from me which she had so much need " of. I hope you will represent all this " to her, and let her know how greatly " I am afflicted at what she has suf- " fered."

" To be sure I will," replied I; " but " Miss Courteney tells me you have re- " ceived letters from Mr. Damer, in " which he acquaints you that there are " some foreign merchants coming to " reside in my house, and that she was " to be removed for that reason. I sur- " prised her greatly by saying I had " heard nothing of it; and, indeed, I " am a good deal surprised myself at " it."

" Why, to be plain with you, Mrs. " Willis," said the young gentleman, " this was only an invention."

" Indeed!" said I, looking very grave: " to be sure you had some good reason " for it."

" Doubtless I had," pursued he, " and " you yourself shall be judge of my rea- " son. This is a bad world, Mrs. " Willis, a very bad world: nothing " but stratagems and designs, fraud and " cunning. Our sex, Mrs. Willis, is " in a state of war with yours; our arms " are sighs and vows, and flattery and " protestation, and (as in all other war- " fares) we fight to destroy."

' Bless us!' interrupted Henrietta, half smiling, ' what could this fine pre- ' face lead to?'

' I protest,' resumed Mrs. Willis, laughing, ' it was with the utmost dif- ' ficulty I composed my countenance to ' a look of grave attention, while he ' uttered all this with a solemn accent, ' and an air of infinite importance.'

" Truly, Sir," replied I, " for so " young a gentleman, you think very " gravely of these matters: it is highly " commendable in one of your years."

" Heaven forbid, Mrs. Willis," ' said he, " that all men should be li- " bertines; but, in short, it was to pre- " serve Miss Courteney from falling into " the snares of one, that I formed an " excuse for sending her into the coun- " try."

' Vile dissembler!' exclaimed Miss Courteney again, glowing with indig- nation; ' preserve me from falling into ' the snares of a libertine! I hope my ' own discretion, without any aid from ' him, was sufficient to guard me against ' any snares that a libertine could lay ' for me.'

' I hope so too,' said Mrs. Willis.

Henrietta blushed a little at this ex- pression, which seemed, she thought, to imply a doubt, but would not interrupt Mrs. Willis again.

' I told you that this gentleman was ' very artful,' continued the good wo- man, ' as you will be convinced by the ' story he related.'

" You must know," said he to me, ' looking extremely wise, and lowering ' his voice, " that when I waited upon " Miss Courteney at the lodgings she " had taken after she left her aunt, I " observed a fine gay young man there, " who followed me when I went out, " and looked at me in a manner that " shewed great curiosity and attention. " It came into my head that this might " be the spark of whom Miss Courte- " ney's aunt was apprehensive: I dis- " covered that he lodged in the house " with the young lady; and this cir- " cumstance I liked by no means. I " resolved to remove her immediately, " and place her with you: she so readily " consented to my proposal, that I " doubted whether I had not been ex- " tremely mistaken in my conjectures " concerning this young gentleman; " but, a day or two after she was settled " with you, my spark came to enquire " for her at my house. Now it was plain " that Miss Courteney held some cor- " respondence with him, otherwise he " could not have known where to come " after her.

" I happened not to be at home, and

" the servants told him that no such " person was there. He came several " times, and was always answered in " the same manner. His enquiries at " length reached the ears of my wife; " she desired he might be shewn up to " her apartment when he came next; " and it was from him that she learned " Miss Courteney was under my care.

" To one of her temper it was enough " to know that I had the management " of a lady's affairs, to make her suspect " that I had a more than ordinary in- " terest in the lady herself. But she " concealed her thoughts from me: and " I, who was wholly ignorant that this " gentleman had seen my wife, was only " concerned at the connection there " seemed to be between Miss Courteney " and him; and therefore fixed upon " that stratagem, to remove her out of " his reach, without giving her any " suspicions of the cause.

" I have since enquired about the gen- " tleman; and I hear that he is a man " of quality, and that he is shortly to be " married to a great fortune. Judge " now, whether his designs on Miss " Courteney could be honourable; and " whether I had not reason to act as I " did with regard to sending her away?"

'And now, my dear,' added Mrs. Willis, smiling, 'did you ever hear a 'more plausible tale?'

'I have somewhere read it observed,' replied Henrietta, 'that we are better 'deceived by having some truth told us 'than none. Mr. Damer has put this 'maxim in practice: his tale is plausible, 'because part of it is true; but his infe- 'rences are all false, and their cause lies 'too deep for me to discover it.'

She then related succinctly all that had passed in the house of Mrs. Eccles, and that she had earnestly intreated Mr. Damer to dispose of her elsewhere, being resolved, after the affront that had been offered to her, to remain there no longer. She added, that the young lord having hinted his suspicions that Mr. Damer was her lover, she thought herself obliged to tell him his name, and explain the nature of his connections with her, that one might not, by going away with a person unknown, leave room for calumny to slander her.

Mrs. Willis was charmed with this candid account of her conduct, which overthrew all Mr. Damer's insinuations. She embraced her with great tenderness. 'All will soon be set right,' said she; 'your aunt will receive you with re- 'doubled affection.' Miss Courteney sighed; but having already taken her resolution, she was prepared for whatever events might happen.

CHAP. III.

WHICH WE ARE AFRAID WILL GIVE SOME OF OUR READERS A MEAN OPINION OF OUR HEROINE'S UNDERSTANDING.

TWO days afterwards a letter was brought by the post for Miss Courteney; the direction was in her aunt's hand. She opened it with some trepidation, and found it as follows:

"HENRIETTA,

'FOR niece I cannot, after what has 'happened, call you—If you had 'not, by the highest imprudence that 'any young woman could be guilty of, 'given too much colour for the shocking 'censures that are cast on you, I might 'perhaps have been deceived by your 'plausible account of things. I am 'sorry to find you have acquired so much 'art, it is but too sure a proof that you 'are less innocent; yet it would be easy 'for me to take to pieces every part of 'your defence, and shew you the ab- 'surdity of it: but this is needless; for 'whether you are innocent or guilty, 'you have greatly wounded your repu- 'tation, and I can no longer with ho- 'nour consider you or treat you as my 'niece.

'There is but one way left by which 'you can retrieve your fame and my af- 'fection; motives which ought to have 'some weight with you, but infinitely 'less than the desire of securing your 'salvation.

'I hoped and believed your conversion 'was near compleated, and doubtless 'it would have been, had not your 'passions intervened.

'If you will retire to a convent, and 'put yourself into a way of being in- 'structed in the true religion, I will pay 'your pension largely; and the day that 'sees you reunited to the faith, shall 'see you restored to my fondest affec- 'tion, and made sole heiress to my whole

'estate.

'estate. Consider well before you de-
'termine; and know that, upon any
'other terms than these, you must not
'hope for farther notice from me.

'F. MEADOWS.'

Although several parts of this letter were extremely shocking both to the delicacy and pride of Henrietta, yet the shining bribe that was offered her to procure her apostacy, made a large compensation. She had now an opportunity given her of making a worthy sacrifice to the religion she believed and professed; a circumstance that exalted her in her own opinion: for her self-love had been deeply wounded by the humiliations she had undergone; and as great delicacy always suffers most, so it enjoys most from it's own reflections.

She was not free from a little enthusiasm, that told her it was glorious to suffer in the cause of religion; nor so disinterested as not to feel great pleasure in the thought of being able to free her moral character from injurious suspicions, by so firm an attachment to her religious principles.

Her impatience to answer her aunt's letter would not allow her time to communicate to Mrs. Willis the contents of it: but, as soon as she had done writing, she sent for the good woman, and put Lady Meadows's letter into her hands, with such an air of conscious satisfaction, as persuaded her the so much desired reconciliation was effected; but when, upon reading the letter, she found her mistake, she threw it down; and, in a melancholy accent, and a look that expressed the most anxious curiosity, asked her how she had resolved?

'Read this,' said Henrietta, giving her the letter she had written; 'I am sure
'you will not disapprove of what I have
'done.' Mrs. Willis read it eagerly, and found it as follows:

'MADAM,

'IT is a great grief to me to find that
'your affection is irrecoverable,
'for, at the price you have set upon it, I
'must ever deem it so. If my defence seems
'absurd, Madam, it is because truth
'is too weak to combat prejudice. I
'leave it to time and my future conduct
'to clear my innocence; and am re-
'solved never to give a confirmation to
'those aspersions which are cast on my
'character, by sacrificing my religion
'to my interest.

'That poverty, which happily is be-
'come my choice, will be my best vin-
'dication; and, if it affords me no other
'blessing but that of a good conscience,
'it will bestow on me the highest that is
'attainable in this life, and which will
'enable me to bear chearfully all the
'misfortunes that may befal me; among
'which I shall always look upon the
'loss of your esteem as the greatest. I
'am, Madam, with all due gratitude
'and respect, your obliged and very
'humble servant,

'HENRIETTA COURTENEY.'

'I must approve, nay, admire your
'resolution, Miss,' said Mrs. Willis, returning the letter; 'and, if you persist
'in it, you will appear to me a won-
'der.'

'Do you doubt my persisting in it?' replied Henrietta.

'When I consider,' said Mrs. Willis,
'your birth, your youth, your beauty,
'and the expectations you have been
'encouraged to entertain, I know it
'must cost you a great deal to throw
'away the advantages that are offered
'you, and which possibly you might se-
'cure by temporizing at least.'

'Dissimulation,' interrupted Henrietta, 'on any occasion, is mean and
'scandalous; but, in matters of religion,
'it is surely a heinous crime; and I
'hope I am far enough from commit-
'ting it; but I own I have many mo-
'tives to stimulate my resolution.

'My own imprudence, and the
'treachery of others, have given a
'wound to my reputation, which a vo-
'luntary poverty can only repair. In
'this licentious age, she who, with
'youth, and even the slightest advan-
'tages of person, dares to be poor, de-
'serves surely to be thought virtuous;
'and I shall ever acknowledge the bounty
'of Providence, that, amidst the unjust
'censures which have been cast on me,
'has made an humble lot my choice.'

'I am satisfied,' interrupted Mrs. Willis: 'reason, I see, has a greater share
'in your so lately formed resolution,
'than the zeal of enthusiasm, or the
'suggestions of vanity; and you may
'believe me a true friend to your fame,
'when I heartily congratulate you on
'your present situation. And now,

'my dear Miſs, ſuffer me to aſſure you 'of my tendereſt friendſhip; a friend-'ſhip which cannot be contented with 'bare profeſſions, and inſiſts upon your 'putting it to ſome trial.

'Tell me how I can ſerve you? O! 'that you would honour me ſo far as to 'let this houſe be your aſylum till for-'tune does juſtice to your merit. Con-'deſcend to live with me, my dear Miſs, 'and ſhare my little income.'

'You are very kind, dear Mrs. Wil-'lis,' replied Henrietta; 'but my circum-'ſtances will not permit me to continue 'your boarder, and no diſtreſs ſhall ob-'lige me to be burdenſome to a friend. 'I have already reſolved how to diſ-'poſe of myſelf; and, in the ſcheme I 'have formed, I ſhall need your aſſiſt-'ance.'

'Tell me, my dear,' cried Mrs. Willis, eagerly, 'how I can be of any 'uſe to you?'

'You muſt,' replied Henrietta, bluſh-ing a little, 'you muſt get me a ſervice, 'my dear Mrs. Willis.'

'A ſervice!' exclaimed the good wo-man.

'I am very well qualified,' reſumed Henrietta, recovering from her firſt con-fuſion, and ſmiling, 'to wait upon a 'woman of faſhion: for my mother 'gave me a uſeful as well as genteel 'education; and this ſtation will be at 'once private enough to ſecure me from 'diſagreeable accidents, and publick 'enough to make my conduct acquit or 'condemn me.

'I will not,' added ſhe, obſerving Mrs. Willis continued ſilent, 'offer my-'ſelf to any place by my own name; that 'would look like an inſult upon my 'great relations, and be perhaps an ob-'ſtruction to my ſucceſs. It is ſuffi-'cient for me, that, whenever I am diſ-'covered, it may be in circumſtances 'at which they, not I, need be aſham-'ed.'

'When I firſt heard you mention this 'ſcheme,' ſaid Mrs. Willis, 'I thought 'I could never be brought to approve 'it: but a little reflection has convinced 'me that it may have good conſequences. 'You cannot be long concealed; that 'graceful form will ſoon draw notice 'upon you. Whenever you are known 'to be in a ſtation ſo unworthy your birth 'and merit, the pride of your relations 'will be rouzed. How glorious, then, 'will this humiliation be for you! Me-'thinks I ſee their confuſion for their 'neglect of you, and their eagerneſs to 'repair it, by reſtoring you to the rank 'you was born in. Oh! my dear, you 'will certainly be happy yet, I am ſure 'you will.'

Henrietta ſmiled a little at the good woman's ſanguine expectations; but, in reality, the ſame thoughts had made a great impreſſion upon her, and contri-buted more than ſhe imagined to allay the uneaſineſs ſhe felt at being reduced to take ſuch a ſtep. By degrees ſhe formed in her own mind ſo romantick a ſcene, that ſhe grew impatient to enter upon it, and again intreated the aſſiſtance of Mrs. Willis.

The good woman telling her that a couſin of her huſband's was a ſacque-maker, and in great vogue at the court end of the town, it was agreed that ſhe ſhould go to her, and engage her good offices towards recommending the young lady to a place; it being very likely that, among her cuſtomers, who were moſtly women of quality, ſhe might hear of one that would ſuit her.

CHAP. IV.

WHICH CONTAINS VERY TRIFLING MATTERS.

MRS. Willis ſucceeded beyond her hopes. The mantua-maker had been deſired, by a lady ſhe worked for, to look out for a genteel young perſon to ſerve her in the quality of her woman; and promiſed her couſin, that ſhe would mention her friend to the lady the next day, being to wait on her with ſome cloaths that were to be tried on. She added, that the lady was a citizen, but had an immenſe fortune, and that her place was certainly a very good one.

Henrietta ſeemed very well pleaſed with her landlady's ſucceſs, though ſhe was not free from ſome uneaſy pertur-bations at the thoughts of the condition ſhe was ſo ſoon to enter upon.

Mrs. Cary did not fail to viſit her couſin the next day. 'Well,' ſaid ſhe, 'I have done the young gentlewoman's 'buſineſs: ſhe has nothing to do but to 'wait upon Miſs Cordwain; and, if ſhe 'likes her figure, ſhe will hire her di-'rectly.'

'Why,

'Why, pray,' replied Mrs. Willis, 'what kind of figure will beſt pleaſe this 'lady?'

'Oh!' cried Mrs. Cary, 'Miſs 'Cordwain's woman muſt be very gen-'teel, and look like a gentlewoman; 'the richer ſhe is dreſſed too, when ſhe 'goes to wait on her, the better. Every 'thing about Miſs Cordwain muſt be 'magnificent. Well,' purſued ſhe, laughing, and taking a pinch of ſnuff, which produced ſeveral little pauſes in her diſcourſe, 'it is really ſurpriſing to ſee theſe 'little cits, how they mimick people of 'quality. They muſt be ſo extrava-'gantly in the faſhion. I vow and pro-'teſt, the negligee I tried on Miſs Cord-'wain to-day had a train three yards 'and a half long.'

Henrietta that moment entering the room, Mrs. Willis, ſeeing her couſin was ſurpriſed at her appearance, ſaid, 'This is the young gentlewoman who 'wants a place.'

The mantua-maker, upon this information, reſumed her familiar look and manner; and, throwing herſelf again upon her chair, took a full ſurvey of the young lady, who thanked her, with ſome heſitation, and a bluſh that crimſoned over her face, for the ſervice ſhe had done her.

'I have juſt been telling my couſin,' ſaid Mrs. Cary, 'that Miſs Cordwain, 'the lady I have recommended you to, 'Ma'am, is very hard to be pleaſed. 'Her woman muſt look like a lady, for-'ſooth: ſhe has refuſed three that went 'to ſee her place; one, becauſe ſhe had 'a red hand; it looked, ſhe ſaid, as if 'the creature had ſtood at a waſh-tub; 'another, becauſe ſhe went to be hired 'in a linen gown; and the third, be-'cauſe ſhe had lived with nobody of 'higher rank than a baronet's wife. 'But I am ſure ſhe can have no objec-'tion to you, Ma'am, unleſs perhaps 'ſhe may think you too handſome. Do 'you take ſnuff, Ma'am?' offering her box, which Henrietta civilly declined.

'But, dear Ma'am,' purſued the mantua-maker, 'who makes your cloaths? 'I never ſaw any thing ſo frightful as 'the ſlope of that ruffle; then ſuch a 'horrid ſleeve: it is well you are natu-'rally genteel.'

Henrietta ſlightly bowed in return for this compliment; and aſked her, at what hour it would be proper to wait upon Miſs Cordwain?

'About one o'clock in the forenoon,' replied Mrs. Cary; 'that's her break-'faſt time. Her father, honeſt man, is 'in his warehouſe before ſix. But this 'is his only daughter; and he expects 'ſhe will be a dutcheſs, or counteſs at 'leaſt. She has fifty thouſand pounds.'

'Where does the lady live?' aſked Henrietta.

'Here, in one of your filthy lanes,' replied the mantua-maker; 'I forgot the 'name of it, but every body knows Mr. 'Cordwain the packer.'

She then roſe up, made one of her beſt curtſies, and hurried into a chair that was waiting for her; for this polite mantua-maker was above viſiting her cuſtomers in a hackney coach: and this inſolence was ſuch a proof of her excellence in her buſineſs, that few ever ſcrupled to pay for it.

CHAP. V.

WHICH SHEWS HENRIETTA IN A NEW SITUATION.

HENRIETTA having ſummoned all her reſolution, that ſhe might acquit herſelf with propriety of the taſk ſhe had undertaken, prepared the next day to wait upon Miſs Cordwain. She remembered the mantua-maker's hint, and therefore avoided any ſtudied ſimplicity in her dreſs; but no apparel, however mean, could have hid that noble air, or diſguiſed that native elegance, ſo conſpicuous throughout her whole perſon.

As ſoon as ſhe was ready, ſhe ſtepped into Mrs. Willis's parlour; and, while a coach was ſent for, aſſumed a more than ordinary chearfulneſs in her diſcourſe with the good woman; for ſhe was extremely deſirous of concealing the emotions ſhe felt upon this mortifying occaſion; and affected a moſt heroick indifference, while inly ſhe ſuffered all that a mind, delicate and ſenſible as her's, could feel.

Mrs. Willis followed her to the door with tears in her eyes. The young lady ſtepped into the coach, ſmiled a farewel, and ordered the coachman to drive to Mr. Cordwain's. A few minutes brought her to the houſe; and the ſervant, of whom ſhe enquired if Miſs Cordwain was at home, having ſhewn her into a parlour, bowed and withdrew.

Miſs

Miſs Cordwain being informed that a lady enquired for her, ordered her admittance; and the ſame ſervant returning, conducted Henrietta to her dreſſing-room.

Miſs Cordwain, who was ſtill lingering over her tea-table with a female acquaintance, roſe up at Henrietta's graceful entrance, and, receiving her with a low curtſey, offered her an arm-chair at the upper end of the room.

Henrietta, conſcious of the error ſhe had committed in not making uſe of the mantua-maker's name before, bluſhed a little at this reception, which was not ſuitable to the character ſhe was to appear in; and, declining the chair, 'Mrs. 'Cary, Madam,' ſaid ſhe. She could utter no more than thoſe two words; but they were ſufficient to give Miſs Cordwain to underſtand her buſineſs.

The haughty citizen, exceſſively ſhocked to find ſhe had been betrayed by the figure of Henrietta into ſo improper an inſtance of reſpect, and that the perſon ſhe took for a lady of diſtinction was the young woman who had been recommended to her ſervice; thought to recover the dignity which ſhe conceived ſhe had loſt from this miſtake, by aſſuming an imperious air and an inſolent accent.

'Who did you live with laſt?' ſaid ſhe to Henrietta, throwing herſelf again into her chair, and glancing her over with a ſupercilious eye; 'I hope it was 'with a woman of quality: you will 'not do for me, I can tell you, if you 'have not been uſed to attend upon per-'ſons of rank.'

Henrietta, notwithſtanding the confuſion ſhe was under at acting ſo ſtrange a part, could not help being diverted with the pride of this daughter of trade.

'I am afraid, Madam,' ſaid ſhe, 'I 'ſhall not be worthy of your place; for 'I never lived in the ſervice of any wo-'man of quality, nor indeed of any 'other.'

'What, you are a gentlewoman, I 'ſuppoſe,' interrupted Miſs Cordwain, drawling out the word *gentlewoman*; 'and now I remember Cary told me you 'had never been in ſervice. Well, that 'does not ſignify: I have no objection 'to your having been a gentlewoman; 'you may be the better ſervant, for what 'I know. For, to ſay the truth,' ſaid ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to her companion, 'thoſe ſort of poor gentlewomen, when 'they are reduced, as they call it, to 'wait upon us, who could buy their 'whole generation, often know their 'diſtance better, and are more humble, 'than ſuch as have been bred to ſer-'vice.'

'Oh!' ſaid the other lady, with an applauding ſmile, 'ever while you live, 'Madam, chuſe a gentlewoman for your 'maid. There is Alderman Jennings 'the grocer's lady: I have heard her 'often declare ſhe never was ſo well 'ſerved as when Colonel Noble's daugh-'ter waited on her. The colonel was 'killed in the laſt war; and, as thoſe 'folks you know have ſeldom any thing 'to leave their families, his fine gay 'daughters were obliged to go to ſervice 'after his death, and did very well; 'but ſomebody left them ten thouſand 'pounds a piece, and ſpoiled two excel-'lent ſervants, by making them gen-'tlewomen again.'

'Nay, if they had fortunes left them,' replied Miſs Cordwain, 'why, you 'know, then, they had a right to be 'called gentlewomen.

'Well, child,' purſued ſhe, turning to Henrietta, 'as I told you before, I 'have no objection to your having been 'a gentlewoman; for I am reſolved 'never to have any other to wait on me: 'I ſhall take you upon Cary's recom-'mendation, and the ſooner you come 'the better.'

Henrietta, who had really enjoyed the converſation that paſſed between theſe two ladies, told her that ſhe would come whenever ſhe pleaſed; and it being agreed ſhe ſhould come the following day, that ſhe might dreſs her new lady for a city-feaſt, ſhe curtſied profoundly low, and withdrew.

Henrietta, whoſe imagination was naturally lively, and not wholly free from thoſe romantick notions which perſons of her age readily admit, began to conſider her transformation from the niece of Lady Meadows, and a preſumptive heireſs, into the waiting-maid of a cit, as one of thoſe caprices of fate which never fail to produce ſurpriſing effects. She could not help fancying herſelf the future heroine of ſome affecting tale, whoſe life would be varied with ſurpriſing viciſſitudes of fortune; and that ſhe would at laſt be raiſed to a rank as much above her hopes, as the ſtation ſhe was now entering upon was below all that her fears had ever ſuggeſted.

But

But these reflections were succeeded by others more reasonable, and which, indeed, afforded her a more solid satisfaction: she was going to refute the censures of an injurious world; to make that innocence, which had been so vilely traduced, manifest, in her chearful submission to poverty and servitude, at a time when a shining fortune was offered to purchase a change in her religious principles, and when perhaps a little dissimulation, or a temporary compliance with her aunt's proposals, might restore her to a rank in life suitable to her birth.

The satisfaction she felt from these pleasing ideas, diffused such a serenity over her fair face, as agreeably surprised Mrs. Willis, who had waited her return with impatience.

Henrietta repeated to her the dialogue that had passed between the two ladies with so much humour, and marked the pride of wealth, and aukward affectation of grandeur and distinction, in these opulent heiresses to the laborious gains of sordid thrift, and perhaps successful knavery, with such delicate strokes of satire, as convinced Mrs. Willis she would not be an injudicious observer of the manners of those whom it might be her lot to associate with, nor pass through this new scene of life without drawing improvement from it.

The good woman was grieved to find that she must lose her so soon; but, being fully persuaded that this humiliating step would terminate in something happy for her fair friend, she disposed herself to part with her chearfully.

It was agreed between them, that the elder Mr. Damer should not be made acquainted with any part of his son's behaviour with regard to Henrietta, till his return from Holland, when the whole affair might be laid candidly before him; and that the younger should be told, that she was gone into service; but where, he was not to be informed.

The next day Henrietta, after taking a tender farewel of Mrs. Willis, repaired to her new dwelling. Miss Cordwain was just gone out to make some little purchases for the evening; and Henrietta, being directed to go into her lady's dressing-room, was met by her predecessor, who had lingered in the house to have an opportunity of speaking to her, that, according to the general custom of servants, she might prejudice her against her new mistress.

From this girl, who was not sparing in her invectives, she learned that Miss Cordwain's temper, which was not naturally good, was extremely soured of late by a disappointment in love; that the packer, her father, had been treating with a certain nobleman for a match between her and the nobleman's eldest son; but that it had been broke off, because the citizen had refused to lay down more than thirty thousand pounds with his daughter, and the nobleman insisted upon forty.

This little piece of history was followed by a thousand other family anecdotes; to all which Henrietta listened in silence, and was not sorry that the censorious waiting-woman, whose tongue had, during a whole hour, run with surprising volubility, was at length silenced by the arrival of Miss Cordwain, whose voice when she heard on the stairs, she took a hasty leave, and retreated through a different door from that which the lady entered.

Miss Cordwain, as soon as she saw Henrietta, slightly inclined her head, in return to her respectful curtsey; and throwing some millinery trifles upon her toilet, sat down to her glass, and ordered her new woman to comb her hair, shewing a fretful impatience at her hair-dresser's long delay; for she was to meet her company at nine o'clock, and it was now almost four: so that she had good reason to fear she should hardly have time enough to dress.

While Henrietta was acquitting herself handily enough of this task, her lady took up a collection of songs that lay upon her table, that she might improve her mind while her body was adorning; and, after reading intently a few moments to herself, she hastily turned over the leaves to a place that was doubled down, and began to read aloud a most piteous complaint of a despairing nymph, whose lover had forsaken her for another: she concluded this doleful ditty with a deep sigh; and repeating the burden of it, *for men are as false as the changeable wind*, 'Henrietta,' said she, 'was you ever 'in love?'

Our fair heroine, who understood this question as a prelude to a confidence from her mistress, was at some loss how to answer it, when she was relieved from her

her perplexity by the arrival of Monſieur Fineſſe, the French hair-cutter.

Miſs Cordwain, immediately dropping her tender languiſhments, aſſumed a ſupercilious air; and, after haughtily interrogating the ingenious artiſt for not coming ſooner, ſubmitted her treſſes to his forming hands, a ſettled gloom all the time clouding her face: for, whether it was that her glaſs, on which her eyes were intently fixed, told her ſome unpleaſing truths, or that her gentle boſom heaved with ſome ſecret diſcontent, it is certain that every thing diſpleaſed her; nor could all Henrietta's obliging attention to the adorning her perſon draw a ſmile of approbation from her.

After five hours labour, however, the lady was compleatly dreſſed. Her father, who had not ſeen her ſince dinner, which ſhe had ſwallowed in haſte, having ſo much buſineſs on her hands, now entered the room; and liking the ſhewy appearance ſhe made, 'Why, Molly,' ſaid he, 'you are as fine as a 'dutcheſs.'

'As fine as a dutcheſs,' repeated ſhe, pouting, 'and why not?'

'Very true, girl,' replied the father, 'thou haſt that which can make dutcheſſes: but, Molly, I have ſomething to 'ſay to thee in private; ſo ſend your 'waiting maid away.'

Henrietta immediately retired into her miſtreſs's bed-chamber; which being only ſeparated from the dreſſing-room by a ſlight partition of wainſcot, ſhe could not avoid hearing every thing that paſſed.

'I have had a propoſal made me this 'afternoon,' reſumed the father, 'and 'I came to acquaint you with it. Mr. 'Harris has aſked you in marriage; 'there's immenſe riches for you, girl: 'what ſay you?'

'Sure, papa,' cried Miſs Cordwain haſtily, 'you have not given him any 'encouragement, have you? A fine 'match, indeed! ſo I muſt be called 'plain Mrs. Harris all my days, and 'there's Miſs Jennings married to a 'viſcount, and has coronets upon her 'coach: three weeks ago, Miſs Collins, 'the broker's daughter, became a counteſs; and but this very morning I 'heard that the Duke of —— is courting Miſs Rogers, our neighbour the 'ſoap-boiler's niece, and ſhe has but 'twenty thouſand pounds. I can't 'bear it; ſo, I can't,' purſued Miſs Cordwain, burſting into tears, 'to ſee 'all my comrades at Hackney boarding-'ſchool married to right honourables, 'and I am not likely to be even a paltry 'baronet's wife.'

Here her tears and ſobs ſuppreſſed any farther utterance, and had ſuch an effect upon the fond father, that he alſo was ready to cry.

'Don't break my heart, Molly,' ſaid he, half-ſobbing; 'you know it is death 'to me to ſee you fret and grieve yourſelf: 'Are you not my only child? Is it not 'for you that I have been toiling and 'labouring for theſe forty years, up early 'and down late, ſcraping all I can together, gaining much and ſpending 'little, and all to make you a peereſs 'of Great Britain; and a peereſs you 'ſhall be: ſo don't cry, my girl, and 'ſpoil your complexion; neither neighbour Jennings, nor neighbour Collins's daughter, ſhall be greater than 'you. You ſhall be a counteſs, Molly, 'will that content you? I will lay down 'the odd ten thouſand that the Earl 'of —— and I quarrelled about, and 'you ſhall have his ſon.'

'I am obliged to you, papa,' ſaid Miſs Cordwain; 'but——'

'Nay,' interrupted the father, 'I 'find nothing will pleaſe you: you were 'crying juſt now, becauſe you were not 'a counteſs; and when I tell you that 'I will part with another ten thouſand 'pounds, to make you eaſy, you come 'with your buts.'

'Why, ſuppoſe I am a counteſs,' replied Miſs Cordwain, 'will not Miſs 'Collins be a dutcheſs, and take place 'of me? I can never endure that.'

'What ſignifies her taking place of 'you?' ſaid her father, 'the duke's eſtate 'is not half ſo good as the Earl of ——; beſides, you refuſed a duke, you know, 'and you have often told me that you 'like Lord B—— better than any man 'in the world, and how have you pined 'ſince the match was broke off!'

'Well, I confeſs,' replied Miſs, 'that 'I do like my Lord B——, and would 'rather marry him than any duke in the 'land, provided that little odious thing, 'Miſs Collins, did not marry above me: 'ſhe to be called her Grace at every 'word, while I am only Lady B——; 'I ſhould die with vexation.'

'Since it is ſo,' ſaid the father, 'I 'ſhall lay aſide my deſign, and make no 'advances to the earl.'

'And

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'And then his son will marry some-
'body else,' cried Miss Cordwain.

'What would the girl be at?' interrupted the good man, with some heat; 'if you won't have him, need you care 'who has?'

Miss Cordwain now burst into a flood of tears: she liked Lord B——, but she could not bear the thoughts of Miss Collins being in a rank above her; and love and envy raised such tumults in her breast, as made her seek a relief in tears.

'I wish you knew your own mind, 'girl,' said the father, half angry, and half concerned at her grief.

'I know my own mind well enough,' replied Miss, sullenly: 'I would marry 'Lord B——, and I would not have '-that proud minx be a dutchess.'

'Take my word for it,' said the father, 'she will never be Dutchess of——; 'I know her fortune is not sufficient to 'clear the duke's estate of two mort-'gages that have almost swallowed it 'up.'

'Nay, then,' interrupted Miss Cordwain, who eagerly admitted an argument that set her mind at ease, 'I am 'sure the duke will not have her; for 'she is so ugly, you know, papa, that 'nothing could charm him but her 'riches.'

'Well,' said the father, smiling with pleasure to see her in good humour again, 'I am to meet a friend of the earl's to-'night; shall this affair be brought on 'again?'

'As you please, papa,' said Miss Cordwain, curtseying; 'you know it is 'my duty to be obedient.'

'Aye,' said the good man, kissing her, 'you have always been one of the 'most dutiful children in the world; and 'I will make thee a lady, though I don't 'leave myself a shilling.' With this wise declaration he quitted the room, leaving his daughter in high spirits; who, after she had called her maid to adjust whatever might be amiss in her dress, and taken a full survey of herself in the glass, stepped into her coach, with the air of a citizen who has a fortune of forty thousand pounds.

CHAP. VI.

CONTAINS AN INCIDENT WHICH THE SAGACIOUS READER HAS PROBABLY FORESEEN.

HENRIETTA, when she was left alone, found sufficient matter for reflection in the sentiments and behaviour of this wealthy tradesman and his daughter; and as it was now become necessary, for her own peace of mind, to reconcile herself to the situation that fortune had placed her in, she endeavoured to extract useful lessons from every scene that passed under her observation.

'Why have I lamented my poverty?' said she to herself; 'riches neither give 'understanding to the mind, nor ele-'gance to the person. How mean is 'Miss Cordwain with forty thousand 'pounds! what narrow notions! what 'selfish passions! how ignorant! how 'contemptible!—All the advantages 'her large fortune procures her, is a 'title and a coronet: honours how despi-'cable, when such as Miss Cordwain 'wear them!

'Let me thank Heaven, then, that 'made my father a younger brother; 'that he inherited the virtues and ele-'vated sentiments of his noble ancestors, 'and wanted that allurement to upstart 'wealth, which might have given me 'a Miss Cordwain for a mother, and 'have deprived me of those generous 'precepts, and those bright examples, 'by which I have been taught to think 'poverty a less evil than dishonour; and 'that a peaceful conscience is cheaply 'purchased with the loss of every world-'ly advantage.'

These were her reflections, as she afterwards declared to her friend. It is not therefore surprising that, with such sentiments, our fair heroine found herself tranquil in her humble station, and dignified misfortune by her graceful resignation to it.

If the woman she served had had judgment enough to distinguish merit, and goodness enough to love it, Henrietta must have engaged her attention and her kindness: but little minds like nothing but what resembles themselves.

Miss Cordwain sometimes condescended to enter into a conversation with her woman, but was quickly disgusted with the difference of their notions; and what she could not comprehend, she either despised as folly, or suspected as artifice.

They were upon these terms when

Mr. Cordwain acquainted his daughter, that they were invited to spend a week at the Earl of ——'s country-seat; for the contested ten thousand pounds being granted by the citizen, the treaty of marriage was renewed; and this visit was proposed in order to bring the young people together again with some kind of decorum.

Miss Cordwain, in high spirits, gave her woman notice to make preparations for this little journey; which done, Henrietta went to take leave of her faithful Mrs. Willis.

'What a triumph would mine be,' said she to her friend, 'if any of my 'relations should happen to be at this 'nobleman's seat, and behold me in 'the character of Miss Cordwain's ser-'vant!'

'You have done right, my dear,' replied Mrs. Willis, 'to call it a triumph; 'for so indeed it would be, the triumph 'of virtue over pride and prejudice.'

The good woman informed her, that her guardian was in a very ill state of health, and was gone to Montpelier, in consequence of his physician's advice: that the young man had been there to wait upon her; and that, when he heard of the resolution she had taken, he affected to think himself extremely injured by her conduct, as it shewed the utmost contempt of his advice and friendship: 'but it was easy to perceive,' added Mrs. Willis, 'that there was more grief than 'anger in the reproaches he threw out 'against you upon this occasion. He 'seemed much mortified at my refusing 'to tell him where you was, but owned 'that his wife made him very uneasy 'upon your account; and when I urged 'that as an argument against the pro-'priety of your seeing him, his silence 'acknowledged me in the right.'

Henrietta was sensibly affected with the news of her guardian's illness; and, since his return was now uncertain, she resolved to write to him immediately, and give him an account of all that had happened to her since he went abroad, fearing that, unless she explained the reasons of her conduct, he might be prejudiced against her by her aunt's representations of it. She would not give him any disquiet, by mentioning his son's behaviour, but left that to be unravelled by time.

Mrs. Willis having promised to get this letter safely transmitted to Mr. Damer, Henrietta took a tender leave of her, and returned home.

The next morning, very early, the coach and six was at the door. Miss Cordwain impatiently stepped in, for she thought every moment an age till she saw her noble lover again; her face dressed in smiles of pleasing expectation, and her heart exulting with the consciousness of her own worth, which, by her father's concession of the disputed thousands, had received such a considerable addition: but being, as before observed, not very happy in the frame of her temper, this sun-shine of satisfaction was soon clouded at being obliged to wait a few minutes for her father, whose slowness but ill suited with her eager impatience.

Indeed the wary citizen, having wisely considered that they had a journey to perform of at least twenty miles, was busied in packing up some necessary refreshments, that they might not be famished by the way. For this purpose, he had caused a neat's tongue, a cake of ginger-bread, two or three pounds of almonds and raisins, and a bottle of sack, to be provided; and he himself brought the basket in which they were deposited to the coach, directing Henrietta to get in first, that he might place it safely in her lap; which done, he took his seat next his daughter, and ordered the coachman to drive.

Miss Cordwain's ill humour insensibly wearing off, they pursued their journey with great satisfaction, not having baited above three or four times on the road.

At length the young lady's eyes were delighted with the prospect of the magnificent villa, which she expected one day to be mistress of; but her attention was soon called off that object by the presence of her lover, who, being just returned from a little excursion on horseback, alighted as soon as he saw the coach stop, and advanced to help his mistress out.

The young lord presented his hand to Miss Cordwain with an air of forced gallantry; but happening to glance his eyes towards Henrietta, he started back in great surprize.

Miss Cordwain, vexed at the attention with which he gazed upon her woman, jumped out of the coach, before he had sufficiently recovered himself to be able to offer her again the hand which, in his confusion, he had withdrawn.

The

The lady having on a capuchin, which she had wore during the journey, untied it, and tossing it into the coach to Henrietta, bid her, in an imperious tone, take care of it.

This action and these words gave the young nobleman to understand that our beauteous heroine was actually the servant of Miss Cordwain: a circumstance which furnished him with new matter for wonder; and indeed this encounter gave him so much perplexity, and so entirely engrossed his thoughts, that the old tradesman (who enquired after my good lord and my good lady's health, with as many bows and scrapes as would have served any trader to express his acknowledgment to a customer whom he had just cheated) was obliged to repeat his questions several times before he could procure an answer.

As for Henrietta, she had, upon the first sight of this young nobleman, whom she immediately knew to be the same person that had lodged at Mrs. Eccles's, been under some confusion, lest he should accost her as an acquaintance before the lady on whom she attended; but observing that, from Miss Cordwain's behaviour, he understood her situation, and took no farther notice of her than by a side glance, which he gave her, full of passionate concern, she was relieved from her fears; and, far from being discomposed at the character she appeared in, she acquitted herself of the little duties of her station with the most graceful ease; gave her lady her fan, received her commands, and, with a little French trunk in her hand that contained some laces and linen, followed her to the house at a respectful distance.

Lord B——'s emotions at this unexpected meeting with Henrietta, having now in some degree subsided, he entertained his mistress as they walked with his usual vivacity and politeness; but could not help often turning to snatch a look at her fair attendant, whose charms in that humble station, a station so unworthy of her birth and shining merit, acquired a pathetick power that melted him to a tenderness he had never known before.

He conducted the lady and her father to the apartment of the countess his mother; and, taking the first opportunity to leave them, retired to his own, that he might be at liberty to reflect upon his adventure.

To know that the woman, whom all his most diligent enquiries for so many weeks could never discover, was in the same house with him, was a circumstance that afforded him infinite satisfaction; but he saw no probability of turning this circumstance to the advantage of his designs upon her. For, with what face could he plead his passion to one of her delicacy, while he was publickly addressing another?

The servile condition he saw her in was a bar to his hopes. She who, with such uncommon attractions, could resolve to be poor, must needs be incorruptible. What allurement could riches throw out for, a woman who knew no other pride but the pride of virtue?

He could not hope to make an impression upon her heart by the disguise of honourable love. She must needs know the terms he was upon with Miss Cordwain; and was afraid that she already despised him for the meanness of such a choice.

It was indeed still in his power to throw such obstacles in the way of this match, as to defer, if not break it entirely, but he could not resolve to make such a sacrifice to love: he would have married Henrietta with half Miss Cordwain's fortune; and was amazed at the violence of his passion, when he considered the prodigious disproportion between twenty and forty thousand pounds. Yet most sincerely did he wish his generosity could have been put to this trial; and, in the violence of his grief at the apparent impossibility that this should ever happen, a thousand times did he curse the malevolence of fate, that united so many virtues and graces in one lovely woman, and denied her wealth; which, however, by his preference of Miss Cordwain, he tacitly acknowledged was worth them all.

A whole hour's labour of thought and reflection left Lord B—— in the same state of anxious doubt and solicitude he was in when he first entered upon this examination of his own heart; and all he could be certain of, in this confusion of ideas and opposing sentiments, was, that the unexpected sight of Miss Courteney had charmed him more than ever; and following the impulse of his passion, without knowing whither it would conduct him, or what it would terminate in, he anxiously lay in wait for some opportunity of speaking to her

in private, which he found when he leaſt expected it.

CHAP. VII.

IN WHICH OUR HEROINE AGAIN APPEARS VERY FOOLISH.

MEAN time our lovely heroine, who had been received by the counteſs's woman with prodigious ceremony, and had, during a whole hour, liſtened with ſmiling attention to all the impertinences ſhe uttered, was at length relieved from the fatigue of ſuch converſation, and, with a profuſion of compliments, conducted to a chamber contiguous to that of her miſtreſs. As ſoon as ſhe was left alone, ſhe began to conſider how ſhe ſhould extricate herſelf from the difficulties her unexpected meeting with Lord B—— had involved her in.

Her delicacy was ſhocked at the thoughts of remaining in the houſe with a man who had made an attempt upon her honour, eſpecially in the ſituation ſhe now was; a ſituation that would ſeem to invite his future attacks: and, though he might well impute their meeting to the fantaſtick effects of chance, yet he would not fail to conſtrue her ſtay into a tacit encouragement of that paſſion he had profeſſed for her at parting, the diſhonourable purport of which was evident from the engagements he had entered into with Miſs Cordwain.

She reflected alſo on the cenſures under which her character laboured at preſent; and was juſtly apprehenſive that, when this part of her ſtory was known, the malicious world would not fail to inſinuate that ſhe threw herſelf into Lord B——'s way, and the inferences that would be drawn from ſuch a ſuppoſed conduct muſt needs be highly diſadvantageous to her.

But, on the other hand, how could ſhe quit Miſs Cordwain's ſervice ſo abruptly, without giving occaſion for ſtrange conjectures, and ſetting the tongue of malice looſe to aſſign reaſons for her behaviour, very different from the truth?

However, the inconveniencies which might attend this ſtep were light, compared with thoſe ſhe foreſaw from expoſing herſelf voluntarily to the purſuits of a young libertine, whoſe eyes, in this laſt interview, had ſpoken too plainly to leave her in doubt of his ſentiments.

She therefore reſolved to go away the next day; and, as ſoon as ſhe was ſummoned to the toilet, acquainted Miſs Cordwain with her intention.

Henrietta was a ſcrupulous obſerver of truth, and would not on this occaſion violate it, by forming any plauſible excuſe for her ſudden determination; ſo that Miſs Cordwain, in whoſe breaſt the ſtings of jealouſy had been rouzed by the paſſionate glances Lord B—— had darted at her maid, began to entertain ſtrange ſuſpicions from ſo unexpected an overture; and, in a peremptory tone, demanded to know her reaſons for quitting her ſervice in ſuch a manner.

Henrietta, with great ſweetneſs, aſſured her that ſhe did not deſire to be diſmiſſed in conſequence of any diſcontent, but that the neceſſity of her affairs obliged her to return immediately to town.

'Your affairs!' ſaid Miſs Cordwain, with a haughty ſneer; 'I vow it is 'mighty pretty to hear ſervants talk of 'their affairs, as if they really had any 'concerns of more conſequence than the 'duty they owe their principals. I wonder you don't tell me you have half a 'dozen engagements in town,' purſued ſhe, laughing aloud; 'ſuch a ſpeech 'would become you mightily: but 'pr'ythee, go, creature; pack up your 'rags in a ſheet of brown paper, and 'take yourſelf away. I ſuppoſe you 'have found out a new method of living, leſs mortifying to your pride of 'beggarly gentility than waiting upon 'a woman of fortune; and I doubt not 'but you will be ſhortly ſeen flaunting 'it in publick places with a flimſy ſack, 'a painted face, and all the trappings 'of your trade.'

To this coarſe abuſe Henrietta liſtened in ſilence, beholding her imperious miſtreſs all the time with ſuch a calm, but ſteady eye, as called up a bluſh in thoſe cheeks which had been before overſpread with a livid paleneſs.

Not that ſhe felt any remorſe for the reproaches ſhe had uttered, or was aſhamed of her indecent tranſports; but Henrietta's ſoft compoſure, the dignity of her ſilence, and the energetick expreſſion in her eyes, ſtruck a kind of awe into her mean-ſouled adverſary; and, inly raging at the inferiority ſhe was conſcious

conſcious of, ſhe commanded her to be gone from her preſence.

Henrietta inſtantly obeyed, and, meeting the counteſs's woman as ſhe went out of the room, ſhe begged her to ſend a ſervant to the neareſt inn to hire a poſt-chaiſe for her, being reſolved to return to London that very day.

This well-bred Abigail expreſſed great concern that ſhe was ſo ſoon to loſe the honour of her company; and aſked, with an appearance of anxiety, if ſhe was not to return again?

Henrietta replied in the negative: at which the other ſeemed wonderfully ſurprized, though ſhe was not ignorant of all that had paſſed between Henrietta and her lady; for, hearing Miſs Cordwain's voice very loud, ſhe had applied her ear to the key-hole, and needed no farther information.

Our fair heroine having evaded the artful queſtions of this prying woman, and diſcouraged her reflections on her own lady, whom, in her general invective againſt the pride and caprice of miſtreſſes, ſhe did not ſpare, told her, ſhe would have the pleaſure of viewing the fine gardens that belonged to the houſe before ſhe went away; and Mrs. Smith promiſed to join her, as ſoon as ſhe had executed the commiſſion ſhe was charged with.

Henrietta accordingly repaired to the gardens, full of reflections upon the ſcene that had lately paſſed. She entered a little covered alley that led to a grotto, which ſhe had an inclination to take a view of; when, hearing the ſound of ſteps behind her, ſhe looked back, ſuppoſing it was Mrs. Smith; but was not a little ſurprized to find it was Lord B——, who, ſeeing her croſs the terrace from his chamber-window, had followed her thither.

Henrietta, rightly judging that this encounter was not merely accidental, turned her ſteps from the grotto, and ſtruck into a leſs private walk. Lord B——, perceiving her intention, croſſed immediately and met her, bowing profoundly low, and, with an air as reſpectful as if he was accoſting a dutcheſs, enquired after her health.

Henrietta, not at all flattered by this inſtance of reſpect, which he by whom it was paid conſidered as an act of ſupererogation, and that it would affect her accordingly, returned his compliment with the moſt graceful eaſe; and, ſmiling, told him, he muſt not now conſider her as Miſs Courteney, but the ſervant of Miſs Cordwain.

'O that horrid appellation!' cried he: 'What violence did I not do myſelf to 'behave to you as I did this morning! 'But tell me, for Heaven's ſake, Ma'dam, what has occaſioned this tranſ'formation?'

'My aunt's continued diſpleaſure,' replied Henrietta. 'Your lordſhip has 'perhaps heard what circumſtances my 'father died in: the ſtation therefore in 'which you ſee me, ought not to be 'called a tranſformation; it is what I 'was born to, ſince I was born in'digence.'

'I cannot bear to hear you talk thus,' interrupted Lord B——; 'how could 'you think of ſubjecting yourſelf to a 'condition ſo unworthy of you, when 'you knew there was a man in the 'world that would have died to ſerve 'you!'

'I am not of a temper,' ſaid Henrietta, 'to be eaſy under great obliga'tions; and ſervitude is, in my opinion, 'leſs ſhocking than dependence.'

'Why do you talk of obligations,' ſaid Lord B——: 'love knows no pro'perty; could you doubt that my for'tune would be at your command? 'Suffer me, I conjure you,' purſued he, 'to ſnatch you from this unworthy ſitu'ation; can riches be better employed 'than in ſupporting her I love?'

'My lord,' interrupted Henrietta, her face glowing with indignation, 'this is 'an inſult I could not have expected 'from one of your rank and politeneſs: 'I am fallen very low indeed, when a 'man, who is upon the point of mar'riage with another, dares talk to me 'of love.'

'There are certain engagements,' replied Lord B——, a little confuſed at the air with which ſhe uttered theſe words, 'in which the heart has no part.'

'Very likely,' interrupted Henrietta; 'but it is ſufficient for me to know, that 'the engagements your lordſhip has en'tered into leave you not the liberty 'of addreſſing me in this manner: and 'I look upon the profeſſions you make 'me as the higheſt inſult upon my diſ'treſs.'

Lord B——, notwithſtanding he found in this juſtifiable haughtineſs the ruin of his

his hopes, could not help admiring a mind so rightly turned; humble with such propriety, and proud only when condescension would be meanness.

'This is not a time,' said he, 'to 'tell you how far I am bound by those 'engagements you speak of; but, what-'ever they are, they ought not to de-'prive me of the happiness of doing you 'service.'

'I am obliged to you, my lord,' said Henrietta; 'but, at present, the greatest 'service you can do me is to take no 'notice of me.'

In speaking these words, she curtsied, and would have left him; but he, not able to part with her thus, snatched her hand.

'You must not leave me,' said he, 'till you promise to give me an oppor-'tunity of speaking to you more fully. 'Oh, how I love you!' cried he, gazing on her passionately.

'Again this insulting declaration!' interrupted Henrietta, pulling her hand from him, and giving him a look full of scorn and anger as she turned away.

'Hear me, Madam,' cried he, pur-suing her: 'suffer me, in the character 'of your friend, to offer you my services. 'My mother was formerly acquainted 'with Lady Meadows: if it will be of 'any use to you, I will engage her to re-'new it, and offer her mediation betwixt 'your aunt and you. You must not, 'by Heaven you must not, continue 'longer in so shocking a situation!'

This proposal, and the earnest manner in which it was made, drew Henrietta's attention: angry as she was, she thought it merited a civil return.

'Doubt not, my lord,' said she, her charming eyes recovering their usual sweetness, 'that I should be glad to con-'sider you in the character of a friend: 'and the offer you now make me is so ob-'liging, that I cannot dispense with my-'self from telling you my reasons for 'declining it.'

She then, in a few words, acquainted him with the purport of her aunt's letter to her: 'Such are the terms,' added she, 'upon which a reconciliation with my 'aunt can be only effected; therefore, 'the countess's interposition in my fa-'vour, were she disposed to grant it, 'would be of no use.'

Lord B——, having before fully informed himself of every thing relating to Miss Courteney, no sooner heard that, for so trifling a compliance as the change of her religion, it was in her power to se-cure Lady Meadows's estate to herself, which he knew to be very considerable, than he thought fit to alter his style, and declared that the affair between Miss Cordwain and him was not carried so far as to take from him the liberty of fol-lowing his inclinations, and of offering her his hand; he begged her therefore to favour him with another interview in the morning, when he would explain him-self farther.

Henrietta perceiving the countess's woman approaching, and unwilling to leave him in doubt with regard to her sentiments upon this new proposal, thus answered hastily:

'My lord, this can never be; there 'are many obstacles against it; you will 'find it very difficult to surmount those 'your own family will throw in your 'way; but, suppose that could be done, 'my scruples will raise others less easy 'perhaps to be overcome.'

She left him when she had said these few words, and went to meet Mrs. Smith, who told her she had procured a vehicle for her, and that it would be at the back gate in less than an hour; 'but,' continued she, 'there is a strange con-'fusion within; have you seen your lady?'

Henrietta told her she had not.

'God knows what is the matter,' said Mrs. Smith; 'she went into the garden 'to look for you, as I imagined, and re-'turned a few minutes ago with a most 'wrathful countenance: her father and 'she confabulated together, and then 'went into my lord's dressing-room; 'and Mr. Jauvert, my lord's gentleman, 'told me that the old man seemed to be 'very uneasy.'

Henrietta had no time to make any reflections upon what she heard; for a servant that moment came to tell Mrs. Smith, that her lady had sent him to look for her, and desired that she would bring Miss Cordwain's woman to her apart ment.

Henrietta, though a little surprized, followed Mrs. Smith with great chear-fulness, who desired her to wait in the anti-chamber while she went to acquaint her lady with her being there; where we will leave her for a few moments, till the reader is informed of the accident that occasioned this summons.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

WHICH CONTAINS A CURIOUS DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE EARL AND THE CITIZEN.

MISS Cordwain, who, in the notice Lord B—— took of Henrietta, found matter sufficient for jealousy and uneasiness, entertained the most injurious suspicions, when she heard her woman's sudden resolution to return to London; and having driven her from her presence with a torrent of abusive language, vented her rage in tears as soon as she was gone.

She reproached herself with her folly, in dismissing her so readily; when, by obliging her to stay, she might have guessed her designs, or perhaps have obtained a more certain knowledge of them.

Her mischievous imagination, being now upon the stretch to find some expedient for protracting her departure, at last presented her with one, which she resolved to make use of.

She hid a diamond bracelet; and then rung her bell for Henrietta, with an intention to tell her that she could not find it, and insist upon her producing it before she left the earl's.

Mrs. Smith, who was that moment passing by her apartment, and knew that Henrietta was not in the way, stepped in, to know what she wanted. Miss Cordwain asked for her maid; and being told that she was walking in the garden, hastened thither immediately, not more delighted with the opportunity she now had of putting a stop to her journey, than of affronting her with the suspicion of theft.

As she descended the terrace, her eyes were blasted with the sight of her maid at a distance in earnest discourse with her lover.

At this confirmation of her suspicions, she ran back like a fury into the house; and meeting her father, who had just left the earl in his dressing-room, told him, that they were invited only to be affronted; that Henrietta was Lord B—'s mistress; that he had taken her out of her service; and that she was going back to London that very night, at his request.

The old man, without staying to enquire farther, or reflecting upon the extreme improbability of this story, swore that never a lord in the land should use his daughter ill; and strode back to the earl's apartment, while Miss Cordwain retired to her own, meditating vengeance on those that had so cruelly injured her.

Mr. Cordwain, who had promised himself to speak to the earl in very high terms, was no sooner in his presence, than he sunk into that littleness which mere monied men are so conscious of with persons of birth and politeness. However, he assumed courage enough to tell his lordship, that he had something to say to him in private.

The earl, observing that his features were ruffled, was a little surprized; but dismissed his gentleman immediately, though he was not quite dressed; and then, with a complaisant smile, desired the citizen to let him know his commands.

'I am a plain man, my lord,' said Mr. Cordwain; 'I don't understand fine 'compliments and breeding, though I 'don't want for manners neither; and 'I am sure I have always been very civil 'to your lordship; and I did not expect 'that your lordship would have invited 'my girl and I here to scoff at us. My 'lord, I can give my girl forty thousand 'pounds, which is what few lords can 'say, let me tell you that; and withal I 'am an honest man, though I have forty 'thousand pounds more in my pocket, 'perhaps: but no matter for that, I am 'not proud of my riches.'

'Mr. Cordwain,' said his lordship, wondering to what this eloquent harangue tended, 'I hope nothing has 'happened to give you any disgust? 'Upon my honour, I have the highest 'esteem for you, and I think I give a 'proof of it by being so desirous of 'your alliance; but I am at a loss to 'comprehend your meaning, when you 'talk of my having invited you and 'your daughter here to affront you. 'Miss Cordwain is a most accomplished 'young lady, and my son has too much 'judgment not to be as sensible as he 'ought of her merits.'

'Indeed,' interrupted Mr. Cordwain, 'my daughter is in my eye a very comely young woman; and I will never 'give her to any man, though he were a 'duke or a prince, that would keep a 'mistress under her nose, as one may say.'

'You astonish me, Mr. Cordwain,' replied his lordship: 'have you any reason to suspect that my son is a libertine?'

'My

'My lord,' returned Mr. Cordwain, 'I am no ſcholar, I don't underſtand 'hard words; I have had learning 'enough to ſcrape a few thouſands to-'gether, and that is ſufficient for me. 'Your lordſhip's ſon may be a libertine 'for what I can tell, that's neither here 'nor there; but I am ſure he is a ter-'rible rake: and what tender father,' purſued he, almoſt in tears, 'would 'marry his child to a rake, to have all 'the fruits of his toil and labour, for 'thirty years and upwards, ſquandered 'away upon lewd women?'

'Sure, Mr. Cordwain,' interrupted his lordſhip, with a ſterner accent, 'you 'do not imagine my ſon capable of act-'ing ſo diſhonourably! His principles, 'Mr. Cordwain——'

'Nay, nay, my lord,' reſumed the citizen, 'I have nothing to ſay againſt 'his principles: he is no Jacobite, I 'dare engage; but he is a rake, my 'lord, that is my objection to him, and 'rakes are very bad huſbands.'

'My ſon,' ſaid the peer, 'may have 'had ſome youthful follies; but I am 'ſure Miſs Cordwain's beauty and good 'ſenſe will fix his heart.'

'And does your lordſhip really think 'my girl a beauty?' ſaid the fond fa-ther, his eyes gliſtening with pleaſure. 'Indeed I always thought ſo; but fa-'thers, my lord, are apt to be partial.'

'She is both beautiful and witty,' replied his lordſhip, who found every excellence in fifty thouſand pounds.

'Nay, as for her wit,' ſaid Mr. Cord-wain, 'I am the beſt judge of that, who 'have ſeen her growing up under my 'eye. She took her learning ſurpriz-'ingly, my lord; and, by the time ſhe 'was ten years old, ſhe had read her 'Pſalter quite through. Would it not 'grieve one, then,' continued he, 'to 'part with ſuch a girl as this to one that 'will ſlight her, and keep miſtreſſes?'

'Do me the favour, Mr. Cordwain,' ſaid his lordſhip, 'to acquaint me with 'your reaſons for ſuſpecting that my ſon 'will keep a miſtreſs, though he ſhould 'be ſo happy as to have Miſs Cordwain 'for a wife?'

'Why, you muſt know, my lord,' replied the citizen, looking extremely wiſe, 'that I have made a diſcovery; 'and your ſon is actually carrying on an 'intrigue with my daughter's maid.'

'Sure this muſt be ſome miſtake,' cried the peer.

'No, no, my lord,' anſwered Cord-wain, 'it is no miſtake, I am very ſure 'of it.'

'And you have diſcovered this in-'trigue, you ſay,' reſumed his lordſhip: 'pray, when, and by what means, did 'you diſcover it?'

'About half an hour ago,' replied Mr. Cordwain; 'my daughter told me 'of it.'

'Oh! then it was your daughter that 'diſcovered it,' ſaid his lordſhip, ſmil-ing a little at the old man's abſurdity.

'Ay, ay, my lord,' cried he, con-ſtruing that ſmile into an acknowledg-ment of his daughter's ſagacity; 'I told 'your lordſhip ſhe did not want for wit.'

'But Miſs Cordwain is certainly 'miſtaken now,' ſaid the peer; 'this is 'ſome pretty frowardneſs, a love-quar-'rel; depend upon it we ſhall find it ſo: 'however, I will talk to my ſon, and I'll 'engage the counteſs to diſcourſe your 'daughter upon this matter. Come, 'Mr. Cordwain, we who are the parents 'of theſe young people know their true 'intereſt better than they do, and muſt 'endeavour to make up this little breach 'between them. I will make an end of 'dreſſing,' purſued his lordſhip, bowing low to the cit, 'and join you in the gar-'den a quarter of an hour hence, when 'I hope to clear up this affair to your 'ſatisfaction.'

Mr. Cordwain immediately withdrew; and the peer having ſtepped to his lady's apartment, to acquaint her with this ſtrange ſtory, left it to her to manage Miſs Cordwain, and went in queſt of his ſon, who, when Henrietta left him, had retired to his ſtudy, and was revolving in his mind a ſcheme which, by recon-ciling his intereſt to his love, would gratify all his wiſhes.

CHAP. IX.

IN WHICH HENRIETTA HAS AN INTERVIEW WITH THE COUN-TESS.

THE counteſs, like a diſcreet ma-tron, was reſolved to ſee the young woman of whom Miſs Cordwain enter-tained a jealouſy, that ſhe might, by wholeſome counſels, fortify her againſt ſeduction; for ſhe ſuppoſed that this ſu-ſpicion took it's riſe from the girl's be-ing pretty, and, perhaps, ſome little un-meaning

meaning gallantry of her son's, who, like all other young men, admired beauty wherever he found it.

She was willing also to know certainly whether Miss Cordwain's fears were only imaginary, that she might the better effect a reconciliation between the lovers; for she passionately desired the completion of a match that would put her son into possession of forty thousand pounds.

When Mrs. Smith appeared, in consequence of her summons, and told her that Mrs. Henrietta waited her ladyship's commands, the countess asked her what sort of a young woman she was?

Mrs. Smith replied, that she was an aukward sort of a body, mightily conceited of her beauty, she believed: 'and 'Heaven knows,' added she, 'she has 'not much to boast of.'

'Well, tell her to come in,' said the countess, beginning to believe, from this account of her, that Miss Cordwain's fears were not without foundation; for vanity, she well knew, was the great underminer of chastity, from the dutchess down to the chambermaid.

When Henrietta entered the room, the countess, who expected to see a very different person, was so struck with her beauty and the dignity of her air, that she rose from her seat, and returned the graceful curtsey she made her with a complaisance that surprised her own woman, who, being ordered by her lady to leave the room, instantly obeyed, but went no farther than the door, where she stood listening, and heard all that passed.

'You appear to me,' said the countess to Henrietta, with an engaging smile, 'to deserve so little the suspicions that 'are entertained of you, that I really 'know not how to mention them to you, 'though it was for that purpose I sent 'for you hither.'

Henrietta was a little surprised at this beginning; but, conscious of the integrity of all her actions, she was wholly free from any apprehensions that could discompose her.

'I know not, Madam,' said she, 'the 'nature of those suspicions which I have 'incurred, but I am very sure I have no 'guilt to reproach myself with, which 'should make me fear to stand the strict-'est scrutiny.'

'Upon my word, I believe you,' said the countess, charmed with the noble confidence of her answer, and the graceful manner in which it was delivered; 'and it must be my son's imprudence 'that has given occasion for Mr. Cord-'wain's suspicions.'

The countess was too delicate to make use of Miss Cordwain's name upon this occasion; but Henrietta in an instant comprehended the whole mystery, and was now able to account for the injurious language she had given her.

'Own freely to me,' pursued the countess, smiling, 'has not my son been 'a little troublesome to you, and talked 'to you of love, and such idle stuff?'

'It is some mortification to me, Ma-'dam,' replied Henrietta, blushing, 'to 'own that I have been affronted in the 'manner your ladyship mentions: how-'ever, it is certainly true, Lord B—— 'has thought me weak enough to be 'dazzled with his professions.'

'Then you have seen my son often,' said the countess.

Henrietta, who thought it behoved her to be very explicit on this occasion, related to the countess the manner of her becoming acquainted with Lord B——, his concealing himself in her chamber, and his behaviour afterwards.

'I did not know his lordship's name,' pursued she; 'and though I often heard 'him mentioned at Mr. Cordwain's, 'yet, as I had no reason to suspect that 'he was the same young nobleman, 'whom I had such reason to avoid, I 'made no scruple to attend Miss Cord-'wain hither.'

'I am very much concerned,' said the countess, 'to hear this account of my 'son: it was a very shocking attempt. 'So you have acquainted your mistress 'with what happened?'

'No, Madam,' answered Henrietta; 'that was not necessary: but when I 'discovered that Lord B—— was the 'person who had treated me so freely, I 'desired Miss Cordwain to dismiss me, 'because I did not chuse to throw my-'self in his way.'

'That was very prudently resolved,' said the countess: 'and when are you to 'leave Miss Cordwain?'

'Immediately, Madam,' replied Henrietta: 'I have provided myself with a 'post-chaise to return to London, and I 'believe it is now waiting for me.'

'Certainly,' said the countess, after a little pause, 'this sudden resolution of 'yours must surprise Miss Cordwain! 'What did she say when you acquainted 'her with it?'

'She was extremely angry, Madam,' replied Henrietta, 'and said many severe 'things to me, at which I was then astonished; but if Miss Cordwain entertained any unfavourable suspicions of 'me, her behaviour may be accounted 'for.'

'Since you have not acquainted her,' said the countess, 'with my son's rude 'attempt upon you, what reason could 'she have to suspect you?'

'I know of none, Madam,' answered Henrietta, 'except his lordship's speaking to me in the garden a little time 'ago, may have come to her knowledge.'

'You have shewn so much candour 'in your answers to my questions,' resumed the countess, 'that I am persuaded you will tell me frankly the 'subject of my son's discourse to you in 'the garden.'

'I was born to suffer indignities, 'Madam,' said Henrietta, her cheeks glowing with indignation: 'My Lord 'B——, though he must know that I 'was not ignorant of his honourable 'passion for Miss Cordwain, yet dared 'to affront me with the mention of his 'love.'

The countess was a little surprized at this sally, which escaped Henrietta in the warmth of her resentment, when she called to her remembrance a declaration, which she looked on as the highest insult, since Lord B—— was acquainted with her birth. Had the countess known that it was the grand-daughter of the Earl of ——, who expressed herself in such lofty terms, she would have admired that becoming pride which suggested them; but, in the waiting-maid of Miss Cordwain, it appeared absurd and ridiculous, and she was ready to suspect her of artifice and dissimulation.

But when she cast her eyes upon Henrietta, and saw the emotion with which she was agitated, the deep blush that glowed on her cheeks, and the tears that trembled in her eyes, she reproached herself with the injustice she was guilty of, in so soon admitting doubts of her innocence.

Henrietta supposing, from the silence of the countess, that she had no more to say to her, curtsied to her respectfully, and was about to withdraw.

'You must not go,' said that lady in an obliging accent, 'till I know whether it is in my power to serve you. 'You have thrown up Miss Cordwain's 'service upon my son's account, it is 'but just therefore that I should procure you another; if you are not 'provided for, I will recommend you 'to my sister, who will either take you 'herself, or settle you with another lady.'

The countess, in making this offer, had another view besides serving Henrietta. She was not willing to lose sight of her, for she rightly judged that, with so many charms in her person, and an understanding far above what was generally found in persons of her rank, this young woman was very likely to inspire a solid passion; and she dreaded lest her son should be so far captivated by her as to neglect the advantageous match that was now offered him.

If she placed her with her sister, or with any of her friends, it would not be easy, she thought, for her son to get access to her; or, if he resolved to continue his pursuit, his designs, whatever they were, would be known soon enough to be prevented.

Henrietta penetrated no farther into the countess's sentiments, than what served to give her a high idea of her benevolence. She accepted her offer with expressions of the deepest gratitude; and this the lady considering as a proof of her sincerity and right intentions, she, in the billet which she gave her for her sister, recommended her in very obliging terms to her favour.

Henrietta again politely thanked her; and, receiving the billet, upon which there was a full direction, she went out of the countess's chamber, with an intention to depart immediately.

Mrs. Smith, whom she found in the anti-chamber, informed her, that her chaise was waiting for her at the gate; upon which Henrietta took leave of her, and descended the back-stairs, but was suddenly stopped by Mr. Cordwain, who had followed her, and, seizing her rudely by the arm, charged her with having robbed his daughter.

CHAP. X.

CONTAINS A DISCOVERY WHICH IT IS HOPED THE READER WILL NOT BE DISPLEASED WITH.

'GOOD Heaven!' exclaimed Henrietta, in the utmost astonishment, 'what can this mean?'

'Look

'Look you, child,' said the citizen, 'my daughter tells me you have stole 'her diamond bracelet: any body but 'myself would send you to prison di- 'rectly; but I am tender-hearted, and 'consider, that though I could hang you 'for this robbery, yet that would be 'poor satisfaction for such a loss: there- 'fore, in compassion, I will spare your 'life, provided you immediately restore 'the bracelet.'

Henrietta had by this time collected her scattered spirits, and comprehended the motive of this malicious accusation.

'May I not see Miss Cordwain, Sir?' said she, in a composed accent; 'I am 'pretty sure that I can convince her she 'wrongs me greatly by this strange su- 'spicion.'

'See her! what should you see her for?' replied the old man, 'unless you 'will give me back the bracelet: you 'must not think to move her with your 'whining; her intreaties shall not save 'you if you are obstinate; so look to it. 'But come, perhaps you will have the 'grace to repent, and return the brace- 'let; come along.'

Saying this, he pulled her up stairs, and led her, with no great complaisance, into his daughter's chamber, who sat exulting in her successful mischief, and the disgrace she had fixed upon the creature that presumed to rival her: a blush, however, dyed her cheeks at the sight of Henrietta, who, with a look that at once expressed the highest contempt of her mean accuser, and calm confidence in her own untainted innocence, asked her how she had so far offended her as to make her seek her life?

'Offended me, creature!' said Miss Cordwain, 'have you the assurance to 'imagine that I am uneasy because—be- 'cause—You vain, saucy flirt—who told 'you that I could be jealous of you? 'and so you suppose—but you shall pro- 'duce my bracelet.'

'Aye, that she shall,' cried the citizen; 'I wish we were in town, I would 'carry her before Alderman Grey- 'goose immediately.—Come, girl, don't 'be a fool, but deliver up the bracelet, 'for this is a hanging matter, let me 'tell you.'

'Do you really intend, Madam,' said Henrietta, looking on Miss Cordwain with a most contemptuous smile, 'to go 'through with this malicious accusation? 'and are you resolved to perjure your- 'self, and swear that I have got your 'bracelet?'

'What does the creature mean!' interrupted Miss Cordwain, colouring.

'My meaning is,' said Henrietta, 'that your bracelet is certainly in your 'own possession; and that you pretend 'to have lost it only to fix a scandal upon 'me.'

'O my God!' cried Miss Cordwain, putting her hand to her head: 'the ex- 'cessive insolence of this wench affects 'me so, I believe I shall faint.—Dear 'papa, let her go about her business, I 'had rather lose ten bracelets than suffer 'so much uneasiness. Dear Sir, let her 'go, one time or other she will meet 'with her deserts. She will not stop at 'this theft, but somebody else may 'bring her to justice; I will have no- 'thing more to do with her.'

'Base woman!' cried Henrietta, almost choaked with rage. 'No, I will 'not take the liberty you offer me: have 'our laws, think you, no punishment 'for a calumny like this, that strikes at 'life as well as reputation? You shall 'be forced to prove your charge, and 'my fame shall be cleared to your ever- 'lasting confusion.'

Miss Cordwain, conscious of her guilt, and apprehensive of the consequences of what she had done, knew not what answer to make to this menace. As for the citizen, he stared with stupid wonder upon the injured fair one: for the extraordinary emotion she was in, gave such vehemence to her utterance, and such fire to her eyes, that he even trembled, as if in the presence of some superior being. But poor Henrietta, after this sudden sally of rage, found her heart so oppressed with the indignity she had suffered, that she burst into a violent passion of tears.

Miss Cordwain was ready to renew her insults, when she found her so mortified; and her father being recovered from his panick, again urged her to restore the bracelet; when a servant came in, and informed them, that dinner was going to be served, and that his lord and lady expected them in the dining-room.

Miss Cordwain immediately obeyed the summons, for she dreaded the conclusion of this affair. When she entered the room, the countess, who knew nothing of what had happened, seeing her

look very pale, asked her if she was well? and Lord B——, who had promised his father to cure her jealousy by redoubled assiduity for the future, approached, and, with a well counterfeited tenderness, expressed his concern for her indisposition.

Miss Cordwain, who had been assured by her father that the earl earnestly desired the match between his son and her should go forward, resolved not to protract it by any shew of resentment at what was past, and therefore received his little assiduities with all the complaisance she was mistress of; but, desirous of mortifying him in the person of her who had so greatly attracted his notice, as well as to give him an opinion of the softness of her disposition, she told him, that indeed she was prodigiously discomposed; that her maid had robbed her; 'and my father,' added she, 'threatens 'the poor wretch with a prosecution, 'and I was weak enough to be ex- 'cessively shocked with her blubber- 'ing.'

'Has your maid robbed you, Miss?' said the countess, extremely surprized.

'She has stolen a diamond bracelet 'from me this very morning, Madam,' replied Miss Cordwain.

'Impossible!' cried Lord B——, in a transport that deprived him of all consideration; 'Miss Courteney could not 'be guilty of any thing mean or scan- 'dalous.'

These words were scarce uttered, when he discovered and repented of his indiscretion; but it was now too late to repair it.

'Miss Courteney!' repeated Miss Cordwain, recovering from her surprize; 'who is Miss Courteney, my lord?'

The countess, perceiving her son was embarrassed, endeavoured to relieve him, by asking Miss Cordwain some questions concerning her loss; but that young lady would not be diverted from her question.

'This creature has a variety of names, 'I suppose,' said she: 'she hired her- 'self to me by the name of Benson, and 'Courteney it seems is that she has been 'formerly known by. Sure I have been 'very unfortunate to get such a wretch 'to attend me!'

'Madam,' said Lord B——, again thrown off his guard by his indignation at hearing a woman of Henrietta's merit so grossly abused, 'you don't know who 'you are speaking of.'

'Why, do you know?' said the earl to his son, in an accent that shewed how extremely he was displeased with his imprudence.

'Yes, my lord,' replied he, 'I do; 'and, Madam,' pursued he, addressing himself to Miss Cordwain, 'I am sure 'you will have candour enough to ex- 'cuse my engaging with some warmth 'in the defence of the unfortunate young 'lady, who is now your servant, when 'you shall know that she is the niece of 'the Earl of ——, and that it is her 'firm attachment to the religion she was 'brought up in, which hinders her from 'succeeding to a very large estate, and 'makes it necessary for her to go to ser- 'vice for a subsistence.'

This account brought tears into the eyes of the countess, who inly applauded herself for her discernment in the favourable sentiments she had conceived for Henrietta before she knew who she was.

The earl appeared moved, and was beginning to ask his son some questions concerning this fair unfortunate, when Miss Cordwain fetched a deep sigh, and fell back in her chair.

Rage at this discovery of her rival's birth and extraordinary merit, and terror, lest the scandalous accusation she had forged against her should end in her own disgrace, operated so powerfully upon her spirits, that she fainted away.

While the countess supported her, Lord B—— rang the bell very deliberately for assistance; and the earl, not much concerned at an accident which he imputed to a jealousy that proved her passion for his son, took that opportunity to remind him that it was his interest to improve the affection this young woman had for him.

The countess, who had in vain searched her pockets for a smelling-bottle, ordered a servant, who appeared at the summons of the bell, to bring one off her toilet; when Mr. Cordwain entered the room, and, seeing his daughter in that condition, made but one step from the door to the place where she sat, exclaiming, 'Oh! my child, what ails 'my child? is she dead?'

'Don't be alarmed,' said the countess, 'it is only a fainting fit, she will 'recover presently.'

Lord

Lord B——, who was ashamed to appear wholly inactive upon this occasion before his designed father-in-law, had presence of mind enough to take a decanter of water from the side-board, and sprinkle some of it on Miss Cordwain's face.

This remedy was applied so successfully, that she immediately opened her eyes, but the first object they met had like to have closed them again; for her father, hearing a smelling-bottle called for, remembered that she always carried one or two about her, and, searching her pockets with trembling haste, pulled out, with a smelling-bottle, the bracelet which she had concealed there, as in a place where it was likely to be most secure, being subject to no search but her own.

The old man made none of those reflections upon this accident which were obvious enough to every one else; but, perceiving his daughter was beginning to recover, presented the bracelet, instead of the smelling-bottle, to her, conceiving the former to be the best restorative.

'See, child!' cried he, in a transport, 'I have found your bracelet. Come, 'you must be well now—I don't wonder 'you was grieved; truly it would have 'been a great loss.'

Miss Cordwain flattered herself, from the words *I have found your bracelet*, that her father had wit enough to save her from any reproach, by giving some favourable turn to the discovery; but in this she greatly over-rated his abilities.

'And where dost think I found it, 'child?' pursued the old man; 'even 'in thy own pocket, as all the company 'can witness.'

'Very true,' said Lord B——, maliciously.

'Was it found in my pocket?' said Miss Cordwain. 'Why, then, to be 'sure, I pulled it off with my glove this 'morning, and forgot it: I protest I am 'sorry there has been so much noise 'made about it.'

'It is a pity indeed,' said the countess, 'considering who the person is 'that was supposed to have stolen it.'

'O la! papa,' cried Miss Cordwain, 'you don't know that my maid Henrietta is discovered to be a great lady. 'Upon my word it is true,' pursued she, seeing him look surprized.

'I am sorry to hear that,' said the citizen, rubbing his forehead; 'for if 'she has friends, who will support 'her, she may commence a suit against 'me for Scandalum Magnatum, and 'what a power of money may I lose! 'See what comes of your heedlessness, 'girl. I protest I don't know what to 'do.'

The countess, though she was vexed at the vulgar sarcasm of the daughter, was nevertheless desirous of freeing the old man from his uneasiness, as well as to have an excuse for visiting the injured young lady.

'I am persuaded,' said she, 'that 'Miss Courteney's delicacy will prevent 'her from seeking any publick reparation for the affront she has suffered; 'but I will see her myself, and, if necessary, dissuade her from taking any 'resolution to your prejudice.'

Lord B——, who was talking to his father at a distant window, hearing this proposal, approached, and, by a look which he gave the countess his mother, seemed to bespeak her utmost tenderness and complaisance to the afflicted fair one.

Mr. Cordwain thanked her heartily for her kindness. 'But, odso! my lady,' cried he, stopping her as she was going out, 'I beg your ladyship's pardon, you 'must take the key up with you,' continued he, fumbling in his pockets, and at last pulling it out; 'for, when I came 'down, I locked the door for fear the 'bird should fly away.' With these words, he gave the countess the key, smiling and nodding his head in applause of his own sagacity.

The countess was extremely shocked to hear of this new indignity which the poor young lady had suffered, but she dissembled her concern, and silently withdrew.

Lord B—— again stole to a window to hide his emotions; and the earl, though greatly disgusted with the behaviour of both father and daughter, yet approached them with a complaisant air, and congratulated the latter on the recovery of her jewel.

Thus did these noble persons accommodate themselves to the manners of those whom they in secret despised; and, for the sake of a few paltry thousands, shewed the utmost solicitude to associate plebeian meanness in the honours of a noble ancestry, and to give title, rank, precedence,

precedence, to one who would disgrace them all.

CHAP. XI.

HENRIETTA RETURNS TO LONDON.

THE countess, who was greatly affected with the cruel usage Henrietta had received, could with difficulty restrain her tears when she entered the room where the fair prisoner was confined: that air of distinction which she had observed in her before she knew her birth, seemed now more remarkable, and made the humiliating condition to which she was reduced a subject of painful reflection to Lady ——, who approached her with a look of tenderness and pity, and, taking her hand,

'I scarce know how to speak to you,' said she, 'about an affair that Miss 'Cordwain has much more reason to be 'ashamed of than you. She has found 'her bracelet.'

Henrietta was a little surprised at the kind and familiar manner in which the countess accosted her; but still preserving that distant respect, which was due from the character she had assumed to a lady of her rank, she curtsied profoundly low, and thanked her for the honour she did her in condescending to bring this grateful piece of news herself.

'I must tell you also,' said the countess, 'that I am not ignorant of your 'name and family, nor of your motives 'for submitting to go to service; for 'which you deserve to be esteemed and 'admired by all the world. It was my 'son that betrayed your secret,' pursued the lady, observing that Henrietta looked surprised: 'I will not ask you now 'how you came to intrust him with it; 'some other time you shall, if you please, 'tell me all your story. I have now 'only leisure to assure you, that I am 'your sincere friend, and that I will serve 'you with all the interest I have in any 'way you shall desire.'

Henrietta, after making a proper acknowledgment for this kind declaration, told the countess, that being determined to continue the way of life she had entered into, till her relations of themselves thought proper to alter it, the recommendation her ladyship had given her to her sister was the greatest service she could possibly desire, and would be ever most gratefully remembered.

'I admire your resolution, Miss 'Courteney,' said the countess; 'but 'I am grieved to think you should be 'in a situation so unworthy of you; 'something must be done to extricate 'you from it.'

'I beg, Madam,' said Henrietta, 'that your ladyship's kind concern for 'me may not lead you to take any steps 'in my favour with my relations. No,' pursued she, with some warmth, 'their 'unnatural behaviour to me deserves the 'neglect I shew them, in not soliciting 'their assistance. I have already got 'over all those little passions and preju-'dices which might hinder me from be-'ing easy with my humble lot; and I 'freely confess to you, Madam, that I 'find a secret pleasure in the thoughts of 'mortifying the pride of my Lord ——, 'when some accident (for some accident 'it must be) shall shew him his niece in 'the quality of a servant.'

'Consent at least,' said the countess, 'to my acquainting my sister with your 'birth, that she may endeavour to place 'you in such a manner as will be most 'agreeable to you.'

'I do not wish, Madam, to be known 'to the person I serve,' replied Henrietta; 'and I desire to have no other considera-'tion shewn me than what my beha-'viour in the station I am placed in shall 'merit.'

'Well,' said the countess, 'it shall 'be as you would have it; but I cannot 'express to you how much I esteem and 'admire you. You may judge of my 'good opinion of you, Miss, when I 'tell you, that as to what regards my 'son's passion for you, I depend entirely 'upon your candour and generosity. 'You know our views for him; and this 'is all I shall say.'

'I am obliged to you, Madam,' said Henrietta, 'for the confidence you re-'pose in me; I will endeavour to deserve 'it. And now, Madam,' pursued she, smiling, 'since my imprisonment is at 'an end, I will, with your ladyship's 'permission, set out immediately for 'London; the chaise I had hired is, I 'suppose, still waiting for me. I hope 'to have the honour of presenting your 'letter to Lady D—— to-morrow, or 'next day at farthest.'

'Take my kindest wishes along with 'you,'

'you,' said the countess, kissing her; and taking a diamond ring from her finger, 'wear this for my sake,' said she, giving it to Henrietta; 'the intrinsick value of it is but small, but I hope you will wear it in remembrance of me.'

The countess went out of the room as soon as she had spoken these words, leaving Henrietta extremely affected with her kindness; and all obstacles to her journey being now removed, she hastened to the gate, placed herself in her post-chaise, which she found waiting, and in a few moments was out of sight.

Mean time, the countess returned to her company, and told Mr. Cordwain, smiling, that he had nothing to fear from Henrietta's vindictive resolutions. Upon which Miss Cordwain said, she would go up to her, and make her an apology for what had happened; but dinner was that moment served, which made it not necessary for the countess to tell her that Henrietta was gone, in order to prevent her intended civility: but, as soon as a proper opportunity offered, she took care to let the young lady know, that her suspicions of Henrietta were very ill-grounded; that she was perfectly virtuous; and likely to remain in the obscure condition of a servant, unless her relations, who were persons of rank and fortune, thought proper to do something for her.

She added, in order to remove all her uneasiness, that she had recommended her to a lady who would procure her a place, which was the least she could do for a young woman of her birth, in such unhappy circumstances.

Miss Cordwain was very well satisfied with what the countess had done; being persuaded that, since she was so desirous the treaty between Lord B—— and her should go forward, that she would take care to hinder any thing from happening on the part of Henrietta, that might give her cause for disgust.

But poor Lord B—— was in a truly pitiable situation: he was in love with the person of Henrietta, and the fortune of Miss Cordwain; and these different passions by turns equally possessed him, so that it was impossible for him to form any fixed resolution.

When he reflected on the solid advantages that would accrue to him from a marriage with the packer's daughter, such as being enabled to play as high at Arthur's as my Lord ——, to bring as many race-horses to Newmarket as ——, to have as splendid equipages as the Earl of ——, and several others, which make the envy and emulation of many of our present race of nobles, he was ready to sacrifice his inclinations to motives so just, so reasonable, so meritorious.

But when the image of Henrietta rose to his thoughts; her person so lovely, her manners so elegant, her birth not beneath his own, her virtue so eminent; how could he think of putting such a treasure out of his reach, by marrying her despicable rival! And indeed, so just were his notions of this treasure, and so high his value of it, that, provided any method could be found to reconcile her to her aunt, and secure to her the succession of her estate, he would willingly have renounced his pretensions to Miss Cordwain, and have married Henrietta; though her fortune, as heiress of Lady Meadows's estate, would be some thousands less than Miss Cordwain's.

Such a proof of disinterestedness, he thought, must needs be very grateful to a young woman of Henrietta's fine understanding and enlarged sentiments; and, having brought himself to this point, his next care was to procure a private interview with her, that he might acquaint her with his designs, and engage her concurrence with them.

But this scheme being defeated by her sudden departure, which he learned from his mother, he was plunged into new perplexity and uneasiness. He asked the countess, with an air of indifference and unconcern, where she was gone, and how she intended to dispose of herself? But that discerning lady, who observed his sudden emotion at the news of Henrietta's departure, would give him no other satisfaction than telling him, that she supposed she would again go to service; for she seemed to have no expectations of any favour from her relations.

Lord B——, after a little reflection, comforted himself with a hope, that some accident or other would again throw her in his way; and that the disgust she must necessarily entertain to a way of life so unworthy of her, would induce her to embrace his honourable proposals; for such he conceived them to be, since all the sacrifice he should expect from her,

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was a temporary compliance with her aunt's inclinations with regard to religion: but, however, he thought it would be prudent not to break off with Miss Cordwain, because in her fortune he would always find wherewithal to comfort himself, if he was disappointed in his love.

In pursuance of this wise resolution, he behaved in such a manner to the citizen's daughter, as gave her no cause to be displeased with him; so that every thing in this noble family, and their designed allies, was upon the same footing as before Henrietta, with mischief-making beauty, came in the way.

HEN-

HENRIETTA.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

CHAP. I.

Atheists have been but rare, since Nature's birth;
Till now she-atheists ne'er appear'd on earth.
Ye men of deep researches, say, whence springs
This daring character in timorous things!
Who start at feathers, from an insect fly,
A match for nothing—but the Deity.
YOUNG'S UNIVERSAL PASSION.

MEAN time our fair heroine, having performed her little journey without any unfortunate accident, arrived late in the evening at the house of her friend Mrs. Willis, who, in her astonishment at her sudden return, asked her a hundred questions in a breath.

Henrietta satisfied her eager curiosity with a succinct detail of all that had happened to her that day, which had indeed been a very busy one.

The honest heart of Mrs. Willis was variously affected with the different parts of her story. She wept for her sufferings; she execrated the malicious Miss Cordwain; she praised the countess; and was exceedingly solicitous about the purport of Lord B——'s designs, which, from what she had heard of his behaviour, appeared to her very mysterious. But Henrietta, who had a thorough contempt for that young lord, declared, that although he should break with Miss Cordwain, and address her upon honourable terms, yet she could not bring her heart to approve of him.

'He is mean,' said she, 'and sordid 'in his temper. His principles are bad: 'he is a lord, but he is not a gentleman; and I am sure I could never 'esteem him. Besides, the countess, 'who is more alarmed about the sentiments he has for me than I think she 'has reason, depends upon my honour 'not to encourage any overtures from 'him, and I will not abuse her confidence.

'It is easy,' pursued she, smiling, 'to be just when our own inclinations do 'not oppose it. I shall pretend to no 'merit in making this sacrifice, if ever 'it be in my power to make it; because 'in reality it will not be a great one. If 'riches and splendour could have made 'me happy, I would have married Sir 'Isaac Darby; for it was not his age 'that I objected to most, but to those 'qualities and manners which made his 'age contemptible.'

'But, surely, my dear,' said Mrs. Willis, 'your gratitude would be en'gaged, should Lord B——, in the pre'sent inequality of your circumstances, 'make you an offer of his hand.'

'Not at all,' replied Henrietta, with some warmth: 'no man has a right 'to the love or esteem of a woman on 'whom he has entertained dishonourable 'designs, and, failing in them, offers 'marriage at last. The lover, who mar'ries his mistress only because he can'not gain her upon easier terms, has 'just as much generosity as the high'wayman who leaves a traveller in pos'session of his money, because he is not 'able to take it from him.'

'Well, well, my dear Miss,' said Mrs Willis, smiling, 'I can collect this 'at least from the nice distinctions you 'make, that your heart is absolutely 'free; you would not reason so well,

'were there any secret passion in the 'case.'

'Surely,' replied Henrietta, 'you do 'not imagine that I should become less 'delicate in my notions for being in love: 'that passion, like some plants, derives 'it's qualities from the soil it grows in; 'for instance, in Lord B——, it is 'mean, selfish, wavering.'

'And what would it be in you?' interrupted Mrs. Willis.

'Ah! no matter,' cried Henrietta; 'I am not in love yet, and never will 'be with a man who has such sentiments 'as Lord B——; he had best be con-'stant to Miss Cordwain. Plebeian 'lords, and the nobility of the shop and 'warehouse, are equal matches.'

To this remark Mrs. Willis, who was pleased with the vivacity of her fair friend, assented only with a smile: for supper was now placed upon the table; and, as she knew Henrietta had not dined, she was extremely solicitous to make her eat; and with the same maternal fondness hurried her soon to bed, that she might recover the fatigue she had suffered during the day.

The next morning, at eleven o'clock, our fair heroine set out in an hackney-coach for ——— Square, where Lady D—— lived, to whom she was to deliver the recommendatory letter which the countess had given her.

The lady was at her toilet when she read her sister's letter, which Henrietta had sent in to her, and immediately ordered her admittance. Surprized at the elegant figure which met her eyes in the glass upon our fair heroine's entering the room, she hastily turned her head, and gazed on Henrietta so intently, that she blushed; which Lady D—— observing, obligingly desired her to sit down, and said, she would talk to her presently.

Henrietta modestly placed herself at a distance, but so luckily for the lady's curiosity, that she could have a full view of her in her glass, without renewing her confusion.

'My sister,' said Lady D——, breaking silence at last, 'has mentioned you 'very advantageously, Mrs. Benson; I 'wish it may be in my power to serve 'you.'

Henrietta bowed respectfully.

'You are very young,' pursued the lady; 'I suppose Miss Cordwain's was 'the first service you ever lived in?'

At the word service, Henrietta blushed again; and indeed, the lady did not pronounce it without some hesitation, for having a sensible and ingenuous mind, she felt the impropriety of the term when used towards a person who, notwithstanding the humility of her deportment, had a dignity in her looks and air which commanded respect. She took notice of this emotion, and the more because she saw it endeavoured to be suppressed; and being desirous of gaining some farther knowledge of her, she asked her a hundred little questions, which she thought would lead her to an explanation of her circumstances.

Henrietta avoided making a discovery of herself, but answered in such a manner, as, without satisfying the lady's curiosity, gave her a very good opinion of her candour and her sense: but she was particularly struck with the graceful ease with which she talked; and observed such a perfect politeness in her manners, as persuaded her she was born in a much higher rank than her present situation allowed the probability of.

Lady D——'s daughter now entered the room, and asked her mamma, if she desired to hear her take a lesson from her singing-master that morning?

The lady ordered the master to be admitted, upon which Henrietta rose up to go away; but the lady told her, with a benevolent smile, that she should stay and hear Miss D—— perform, and desired her to resume her seat.

While the young lady was singing, Lady D—— kept her eyes fixed on Henrietta's face; and, from the sweet expression in it, supposing that she had a taste for musick, asked her, if she had ever been taught?

Henrietta, though not willing to make a display of talents which were not necessary to her present condition, yet owned, that she had a little knowledge of musick.

Lady D—— immediately desired to hear her sing; and the young lady at the same time presenting her guitar to her, she was obliged to comply. Her air, her attitude, the exquisite grace with which she touched the little instrument, the sweetness of her voice, and the sensibility in her fine eyes, charmed Lady D——, who was an enthusiastic admirer of the art; so that she cried out in a kind of transport, 'Mr. Minime, would you 'not be proud of such a scholar?'

'Madam,' said the master, bowing, 'the

'the young gentlewoman has a very 'pretty voice and manner, to be sure: 'but if Miss D—— applies closely to 'musick for seven or eight years longer, 'and does not suffer her mind to be 'distracted with the study of other scien- 'ces, I shall have more reason to be 'proud of my scholar than any master 'in the world.'

This speech forced a smile from Henrietta, who the third time rose up to be gone, upon hearing a female visiter announced; but Lady D——, conceiving that she was not obliged to a strict observation of ceremony with the person now entering, (who was of a very low birth, but had a competent fortune left her by a father, who had held it as a maxim of sound wisdom, that money should be got by any means) again insisted upon Henrietta's staying, telling her, she had thought of something for her, and that she would acquaint her with it as soon as the lady was gone.

Henrietta had but just time to express a grateful acknowledgment of her kindness, when the visiter was introduced. She was a woman of a very mean aspect, but had a great deal of self-sufficiency in her air. After the usual compliments were over, she threw herself into an easy chair, and examined Henrietta with such extreme attention, that she blushed.

The lady, who took consequence to herself from the power of throwing an ingenuous mind into confusion, finding that Henrietta was oppressed by her looks, gazed at her the more earnestly: and having indulged herself several minutes in this exertion of her superiority, thought it was now time to make the poor bashful girl stare in her turn, and began to display her wit and learning; the former in an inundation of words that swallowed up her meaning; and the latter in French words and phrases, brought in to supply the deficiencies of her own native tongue.

Lady D——, who was used to divert herself with the ridiculous singularity of this woman's character, listened to her with complaisance. But Henrietta, who began to conceive a very mean opinion of a lady who seemed to value herself so highly upon the knowledge of a language which was now become a part of every cobler's daughter's education, beheld her with an indifference that sensibly wounded her pride, and made her have recourse to other methods to impress her prodigious consequence upon her; and since she could not make her stare at her learning, she was resolved to make her wonder at her principles.

'You know, Lady D——,' said she abruptly, 'I do not often go to church.'

'I know it, and I am sorry for it,' replied her ladyship.

'Upon my word,' said she, 'I have 'too much reverence for the Deity to 'go to a place where it is ten to one but 'I shall hear him blasphemed.'

Henrietta now began to stare indeed. The wonderful lady proceeded—

'I never pretend to deny that I am 'a deist.'

'You must pardon me, Mrs. ——,' interrupted Lady D——, 'if I tell you 'that I really think you often declare 'that very improperly; I have heard 'you say so before your children and 'servants.'

'Madam,' replied Mrs. ——, 'I 'take care that my servants shall not 'think me an atheist. They know my 'principles better: they know I am a 'deist; they have heard me declare that 'I believe there is an intelligent cause 'which governs the world by physical 'rules. As for moral attributes, there 'is no such thing; it is impious and ab- 'surd to suppose it. The arbitrary con- 'stitution of things in the human system 'produces happiness and misery; that is 'to say, misery and happiness is pro- 'ductive of—or rather, as I said before, 'the arbitrary constitution of things, 'vice and virtue, is necessarily produced 'by—that is, necessarily brings on hap- 'piness or misery. Prayer, and such 'like artifices of religion, is foolish: for 'whatever is, is right. To talk of imi- 'tating God, is blasphemy. His Pro- 'vidence is extended to collective bodies 'only; he has no regard to individuals; 'nor is the soul a distinct substance from 'the body. There is no future state; 'it is all a fiction. To argue from un- 'equal distributions is absurd and blas- 'phemous. Whatever is, is best. The 'law of nature is sufficiently clear; and 'there is no need of any supernatural 'revelation.'

'I must entreat you, Madam,' interrupted Lady D——, seeing her eldest daughter that moment enter the room, 'to change the discourse now; Miss 'D—— has not been used to such deep

'reasoning on these awful subjects, and 'may perhaps mistake what you are say-'ing for blasphemy.'

'More absurd mistakes than that may 'be made, Madam,' replied Mrs. ——, 'when persons are not allowed to exer-'cise their mental faculties.—But your 'ladyship is going to dress—I interrupt 'you.' Saying this, she rose up, and Lady D—— making no efforts to detain her, took her leave.

'I have always hated that woman,' said Miss D——, as soon as she was gone, 'ever since I heard her ridicule 'parental affection, and call it brutal 'instinct.'

'Oh!' said Lady D——, laughing, 'it would ill become one of her elevated 'understanding to have natural af-'fections: those she treats as vulgar 'prejudices. Her own sex are the ob-'jects of her scorn, because they are 'subject to such weaknesses as tender-'ness and pity. She reads Seneca on 'friendship in the morning; and ex-'claims, "O the exalted passion! how "divinely he treats it! what noble sen-"timents!" In the afternoon, she over-'reaches her friend, and applauds her 'own wisdom. Epictetus is studied with 'great care. She will preach a moral 'sermon out of Epictetus that will last 'two hours. Epictetus teaches her to 'curb her passions. She reads him in-'tently while her maid is combing her 'hair, and closes her book to storm at 'the poor trembling creature for ac-'cidentally hurting her with the comb.'

CHAP. II.

IN WHICH HENRIETTA MAKES A VERY FANTASTICK DISTINCTION.

HENRIETTA could not help smiling at Lady D——'s satirical manner of exposing the follies of the lady who had just left the room: but a female free-thinker was, in her opinion, so shocking a character, that she would much rather have seen it the object of abhorrence than mirth.

Lady D—— put an end to her reflections: for, turning towards her, 'Mrs. 'Benson,' said she, 'it is time to think 'of you now.' Henrietta immediately rose from her seat.

'There is a lady of my acquaintance,' pursued Lady D——, 'to whom your 'accomplishments of singing and play-'ing will make you a very acceptable 'companion: and indeed, I think it is 'a pity a young woman of your appear-'ance and genteel education should re-'main in the condition of a servant, 'which I am persuaded you was not 'born to.'

Henrietta blushed; which Lay D—— observing, 'Come,' said she, smiling, 'be ingenuous, and confess that the pro-'posal I have made you will suit you 'better than being a servant.'

'Indeed, Madam, it does not,' replied Henrietta; 'I am extremely obliged to 'your ladyship for your kind intentions, 'but I had rather be recommended to 'the lady as a servant than in any other 'character.'

'You surprize me,' said Lady D——, after a little pause; 'what objections can 'you have to a situation so much to be 'preferred to servitude?'

'I am very sure, Madam,' said Henrietta, 'that I have not too much pride 'to be a servant, since it is necessary I 'should be one: but I am afraid I 'cannot so easily submit to be a depen-'dent.'

Lady D——, a little disappointed to find herself so far below this obscure young person in delicacy of sentiment, answered gravely,

'Well, since it must be so, I will 'serve you in your own way; let me see 'you again a few days hence, by that 'time I may possibly have heard of some-'thing for you.'

Henrietta again politely thanked her ladyship, and withdrew, leaving Lady D—— and her daughter differently affected with her behaviour in this last instance: for young minds are apt to be struck with uncommon sentiments, and to admire such as seem to possess them; while persons advanced in years, either from experience of the world, or the natural depravity of the human heart, ascribe every thing to affectation and design that contradicts certain received maxims in life.

However, Henrietta's peculiarity made Lady D—— extremely desirous to know who she was, and whether there was any thing extraordinary in her circumstances. She wrote to the countess her sister, expressing her curiosity: but that lady was resolved to keep Henrietta's secret, as well in regard to the promise she had given her, as because she really thought an

an unseasonable discovery of her true name and family would be disadvantageous to the plan she had laid.

She therefore contented herself with telling her sister, in answer, that Mrs. Benson was a very deserving young woman, who had been well brought up, but, by misfortunes in her family, reduced to go to service.

Lady D—— was satisfied with this account; and when Henrietta, in obedience to her commands, waited on her again, she received her with great benevolence; told her, she had recommended her to a lady of great fortune, whose place she believed would be an advantageous one; and ordered her own woman to go with a message to the lady, and introduce her.

Henrietta having a hackney-coach waiting, Lady D——'s woman and her, after some ceremonies which our fair heroine would gladly have dispensed with, seated themselves in it; and, as soon as it drove from the door, the Abigail began—

'Well, Madam, you are certainly 'very fortunate; Mrs. Autumn's place 'is one of the best in Christendom: you 'have nothing to do but to flatter her, 'and you will gain her heart for ever.'

'Is the lady fond of flattery, then?' said Henrietta.

'Oh! immensely,' cried the other; 'but, for fear you should mistake, and 'compliment her in the wrong place, 'you must know (and I think it is very 'lucky that I had an opportunity of instructing you) you must know that, 'though she is between forty and fifty 'years of age, she affects to be thought 'extremely young; and having been 'handsome in her youth, as my lady 'says, she forgets she is no longer so, now 'she is old.

'Now, dear Madam, this is your cue. 'Be sure to praise her bloomy complexion, and the brightness of her eyes; 'and, if she bids you guess how old she 'is, as 'tis ten to one but she will some 'time hence, don't exceed twenty years, 'I charge you.

'The poor simple girl that lived with 'her last, lost her place, by saying, 'when she asked her how old she believed her to be, that she took her ladyship to be about the same age as her 'mother. She was a vulgar creature, 'to be sure. You, Madam, are in no 'danger of speaking so improperly. But 'on certain occasions you may contradict her rudely, and she will be the 'more pleased; as, for instance, when 'she says she looks horridly! tell her, in 'a surly way, as if you were vexed at 'her perverseness, that you never saw 'her look so handsome.'

'Mighty well,' said Henrietta, smiling, 'I perceive you are excellent in this 'art; I am——'

'Oh! no thanks, dear Madam,' interrupted Lady D——'s woman, 'I am 'fond of doing good offices.'

'I was going to say,' replied Henrietta, 'that I am afraid these wise documents will be thrown away upon 'me.'

'I hope not,' said the other, gravely. 'Come, take courage, you are but a 'young beginner; these things come of 'course. I should be sorry you were 'not capable of taking good counsel.'

They were now arrived at Mrs. Autumn's house. Lady D——'s woman sent up word, that she was come with the person her lady had recommended to her ladyship; upon which both were ordered to go up stairs.

They found the lady giving audience to a milliner, a mantua-maker, and a mercer. Several pieces of silk lay unrolled before her; and a vast variety of ribbands, lappets, egrets, and other fashionable trifles, were spread upon a table, on which she leaned, in a thoughtful posture, as unable to determine her choice.

When Henrietta and her companion entered, she raised her eyes, and nodding familiarly at Lady D——'s woman, who approached her, curtseying; 'You find 'me excessively busy, Mrs. Ellis,' said she: 'well, what has Lady D—— sent 'me? Oh! a good likely body,' pursued she, looking at Henrietta. 'My 'compliments, Mrs. Ellis, and thanks. 'You see I have hardly time to speak 'to you. The young woman may stay, 'I'll talk to her presently.'

Mrs. Ellis withdrew; and the lady resuming her contemplative posture, gave Henrietta an opportunity of considering her at leisure.

If Lady D——'s woman had not fixed her age at somewhat more than forty, she would have concluded her to have been older, by the deep furrows in her face, her fallen cheeks, and the poor shrivelled hand that supported her head: but her dress spoke her scarce fifteen; a French

French fillet supplied the place of a cap, and served to bind the few straggling hairs that graced her temples, to a tête, which was so loaded with hair, that her head seemed to be of an enormous size. The rest of her dress was suited exactly to the childish ornaments of her head; and, though no object could be more ridiculous, yet Henrietta beheld her with a serious concern; for true benevolence compassionates those follies which unfeeling hearts sacrifice to mirth.

Mrs. Autumn at length rose up. 'That 'must be the thing,' said she, pointing to a pink and silver. She then gave some directions to her milliner; and, suddenly interrupting herself, turned with a lively air to the mercer, and asked him, why he had not cut off the silk?

'Your ladyship did not tell me how 'much you wanted,' replied the tradesman.

'Lord! I am the giddiest creature,' exclaimed Mrs. Autumn. This matter, however, was soon settled: and the important business with the milliner dispatched, she dismissed her trades-people; and, throwing herself with an affected air upon a settee, ordered Henrietta to come forward.

'I was afraid,' said she, 'that Lady 'D——, who is very fond of seeing 'grave solemn faces about her, had sent 'me some antiquated creature that would 'have frightened me; but you seem to 'be a sprightly young body: we shall 'agree very well, I hope.'

Henrietta curtsied.

'I hate old people,' pursued the lady; 'they are generally obstinate and surly. 'God help us! we shall all be old if we 'live—but when one is in years one's 'self, it is time enough to be plagued 'with the humours of those that are. 'You will suit me extremely well.'

Henrietta curtsied again.

'You are no talker, I find,' said Mrs. Autumn, a little chagrined that the hints she had thrown out had produced nothing which could flatter her extreme desire of being thought young. 'Well, 'there is no great harm in that; I shall 'take you upon Lady D——'s recommendation. As for terms——'

'Madam,' said Henrietta, who now for the first time opened her mouth, 'they shall be whatever you think proper.'

'Very well,' said the lady, 'we will 'talk no more about them, then; if you 'can find out how to please me, which 'will be no difficult matter I assure you, 'my place may prove a very advantageous one, and the sooner you come 'the better.'

Henrietta told her, she was ready to come whenever she pleased. Upon which, Mrs. Autumn, with the pretty impatience of youth, asked her, if it would be any inconvenience to her to come that very night?

Henrietta, who was naturally obliging, assured her it would not; and was dismissed with a gracious smile for her ready compliance.

Mrs. Willis, who had flattered herself that she should enjoy the company of her amiable friend for a few weeks at least, was greatly disappointed when she found she was to lose her so soon; and gently blamed her for being so precipitate.

Henrietta gave her the character of the lady she was going to live with, and repeated what she had said to her. 'You 'may be sure,' added she, 'that I shall 'never please Mrs. Autumn in the way 'she expects to be pleased. Flattery is 'always mean; but to flatter folly, is, 'in my opinion, criminal. However, I 'gladly embraced the first opportunity 'that offered to shew my willingness to 'oblige, though I would not flatter her. 'You will hardly believe me, perhaps,' said she, smiling, 'when I tell you, that 'one of the greatest bars to my happiness, in my present humble situation, 'is the difficulty of pleasing without 'wounding my own delicacy and candour. It is not easy to live well with 'our superiors, and preserve our integrity, but it is not impossible; and, if 'I fail in that attempt, I shall at least 'have this satisfaction, that I suffer in 'the cause of virtue.'

'It requires all that sweetness of temper 'which you possess,' said Mrs. Willis, 'to live with a woman of Mrs. Autumn's fantastick turn, without being 'disgusted with it. What an absurdity, 'at fifty years to expect to be thought 'young! and to imagine that, by affecting the follies of youth, she shall 'have the bloom of it also! Our sex 'have been reproached with never cultivating our minds till we can no longer 'please by our persons; but here is a 'woman who has not judgment enough 'to know when she ought to resign the 'hope of pleasing by her person. Take

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'my word for it, you will be very unhappy with her, unless you resolve to accommodate yourself to her humour, and soothe her in her ridiculous folly.'

'That I will not do,' replied Henrietta; 'and since I have learned not to fear poverty, my happiness will never depend upon others.'

Mrs. Willis, finding she could not prevail with her fair friend to alter her resolution, acquiesced in it at length; and Henrietta, taking an affectionate leave of her, repaired to her new habitation.

CHAP. III.

WHICH SHEWS HENRIETTA IN HER NEW SERVICE, WHERE SHE ACQUITS HERSELF EXTREMELY ILL.

THE lady being engaged with company when Henrietta arrived, she did not see her till late at night, when she was summoned to undress her.

'Come hither, Henrietta,' said she, as soon as she entered the room; 'I have 'seen Lady D—— since you was here. 'She has given me such an advantageous 'account of your understanding, that 'I am resolved to make you my confidant.'

At the word Confidant Henrietta looked a little confused: but the lady, who did not observe her emotion, reclined her head upon her hand, and fixing her eyes on her glass, to see how this pensive attitude became her—

'I am certainly,' pursued she, sighing, 'the most unfortunate woman in 'the world! Benson, if you would be 'happy, never marry.'

'I have no thought of marriage at 'present, Madam,' said Henrietta.

'Ah, how I envy your freedom!' said the antiquated fair; 'you are plagued 'with no unreasonable jealousy. Ben'son, you will not be here long be'fore you are a witness to my persecu'tions. I wish I could conceal them, 'but that is impossible.'

'I am sorry, Madam,' said Henrietta, who was under a necessity of saying something in answer to this strange stuff, 'to hear that you have any thing to make 'you uneasy.'

'It does not signify,' exclaimed the lady, with an emotion which she herself took to be real; 'I shall be choaked if 'I don't speak: may I depend upon 'your prudence, Benson!—But I am 'sure I may. Well, then, you must 'know there is a poor young fellow who 'pretends—But why do I say pretends '—who is desperately—what shall I call 'it—who has an unconquerable, invincible, hopeless, fatal, dying passion, 'for—for me, in short. Is not this a 'shocking thing?'

'Indeed! Madam,' replied Henrietta, with great truth, 'I pity you extremely.'

'Aye, am I not greatly to be pitied, 'child?' said the lady. 'Then the poor 'wretch cannot conceal his folly; and it 'makes Mr. Autumn so uneasy, that 'really his temper is intolerable.'

'Pardon me, Madam,' said Henrietta; 'but I am not surprized that Mr. 'Autumn is uneasy at such folly, as you 'justly call it.'

'Why, to be sure, it is folly,' said Mrs. Autumn: 'but then, if one re'flects a little—It is not folly neither—'for love, you know, is an involuntary 'passion. So that—but you have a very 'unfeeling heart, Benson; and yet, to 'judge by your looks, you should have 'great sensibility. Pray, have you never 'felt the tender passion?'

'If you mean love, Madam,' replied Henrietta, 'indeed I cannot say I have.'

'Well, you will be a happy creature,' said the lady, sighing, 'if you can al'ways maintain this indifference: but 'poor Languish must not expect to meet 'with much compassion from you. Poor 'wretch!' continued she, laughing, 'I 'cannot help triumphing a little; I have 'nick-named him Languish from his 'eternal sighing, and the melancholy 'roll of his eyes. Mr. Autumn can'not endure to hear me call him by this 'name; but I love to plague him a lit'tle now and then: what signifies power, 'if one does not shew one has it. Yet 'he ought to be satisfied with me for 'what I did this evening, when Lan'guish indiscreetly betrayed the violence 'of his passion, by eagerly running '(though there were two gentlemen 'nearer) to take up my glove which I 'had dropped: I took no notice of the 'dying air with which he presented it to 'me; but, as if his touch had polluted 'it, I received it haughtily from him, and 'threw it aside. Sure this instance of 'disdain was enough to satisfy a jealous 'husband; yet mine, instead of looking 'pleased,

'pleased, coloured with jealousy and 'rage, and gave me such furious glan-'ces—however, this will always be the 'case, where there is so great a dispro-'portion in age; Mr. Autumn is not 'less than forty. But hey-day! is the 'girl asleep?' continued she, looking at Henrietta, who stood fixed in thought; for the absurd affectation of her mistress gave her matter enough for reflection. 'Come, undress me: Mr. Autumn will 'wonder at my long stay; and as he is 'ingenious in tormenting himself, he 'will possibly suspect that I have been 'reading a letter from this rival of his; 'but there he over-rates his presump-'tion; he has not ventured to write to 'me yet, his passion is only expressed 'in sighs and looks.'

Henrietta made haste to obey her, her patience being almost exhausted; for Mrs. Autumn had got on a subject which she knew not how to quit; and her women being the only persons to whom she could utter these extravagancies, without any danger of being mortified with sarcastick hints of age, and such envious and unjust reflections, she made herself amends with them for the reserve she was, much against her will, obliged to maintain with others.

Henrietta was at length ordered to wait on her to her chamber, and soon after retired to her own, greatly out of humour with her mistress, and not a little displeased at herself, to find that her philosophy, by which she was enabled to bear the change of her fortune with patience and resignation, could not guard her against fretfulness and disgust at the follies she was forced to be witness to.

Mrs. Autumn, like other modern ladies, lay in bed always till it was very late: this being one of those happy expedients for killing time (as the fashionable phrase is) which, to discover, employs the inventions of persons of rank and fortune. Henrietta had attended three whole hours in her lady's dressing-room, in expectation every moment of being summoned to assist her to rise, when Mr. Autumn at length entered the room.

His servant, while he was dressing him, had told him, that his lady's new woman, whom he had a glimpse of as he passed by her on the stairs, was the greatest beauty he ever beheld; so that, being curious to see her, he came to breakfast with his wife that morning.

Henrietta rose up at his entrance; Mr. Autumn bowed, looked at her attentively, and thought his man had taste. But he was still more struck with her noble air than the charms of her face, and felt an uneasy emotion when he saw her continue standing, with that humble respect which, although it became her situation, seemed little suited to the dignity of her appearance. 'Is not Mrs. 'Autumn up, Madam?' said he, not being able to forbear using that respectful style. Henrietta, supposing he did not know her rank in his family, replied,

'I expect my lady will ring every 'moment, Sir.'

'Pray let her know that I am come 'to breakfast with her,' said Mr. Autumn.

Henrietta went immediately into her lady's chamber, and, finding her awake, delivered her message.

'Lord bless me!' said Mrs. Autumn, 'what new whim is this? He does not 'use to invade my apartment in a morn-'ing: I suppose he is come to teaze 'me with some of his jealous fancies. 'Well, since it must be so, order break-'fast to be sent in, and come to me di-'rectly.'

'What a ridiculous woman is this,' thought Henrietta, as she went out of the room, 'to torment herself, at her 'age, with the notion of her husband 'being jealous of her!'

The good lady, when she returned, charged her not to leave the room while they were at breakfast. 'Your pre-'sence,' said she, 'may perhaps be some 'restraint upon him.'

She then slipped on a night-gown, and went in a frightful dishabille to attend her complaisant spouse; for she was one of those ladies who dress for every body but their husbands.

Henrietta was not sorry that she was directed to wait, for she was extremely desirous of knowing whether her lady had any reason for the uneasiness she expressed. Mr. Autumn's good humour and complaisance soon put that matter out of doubt: but Mrs. Autumn was resolved to persuade her maid that her husband was jealous; and, laughing affectedly, cried—

'Well, don't be chagrined, Mr. Au-'tumn, but I protest I dreamt of poor 'Languish last night!'

The husband shook his head, winked at his wife, and pointed to Henrietta, as if

if he had said, 'Don't expose yourself 'before your new servant.'

'Why, how you frown now!' pursued Mrs. Autumn; 'I knew you would 'be angry. Lord! what does it signify 'of whom one dreams? one does not always think of the persons one dreams 'of. I wish I had not told you.'

'I wish you had not,' said Mr. Autumn, biting his lip with vexation at her folly. The lady then lowering her voice, as if she was not willing to be heard by Henrietta, though she took care not to make it impossible, repeated—

'Trifles, light as air,
'Are to the jealous, confirmations strong
'As proofs of holy writ.'

'You are well read in Shakespeare, 'Madam,' said Mr. Autumn, who was willing to give another turn to the discourse.

'Oh!' exclaimed she, 'he has touched the passion of jealousy finely in his 'character of Othello; I think the Moor 'was uneasy about a dream too.'

Just then somebody tapped at the door; Henrietta opened it: one of the footmen delivered a message from one lady, enquiring how Mrs. Autumn did, and a sealed-up card from another.

While the servant was speaking, Mrs. Autumn called out, 'What makes the 'fellow whisper in that manner, as if the 'message he brings was a secret!' Henrietta delivered her the card, which she threw upon the table without opening it. 'I am resolved,' said she, 'to turn that 'blockhead away; his mysterious manner is enough to put strange fancies 'into people's heads.'

'The strange fancies are all your 'own,' said Mr. Autumn, peevishly.

'I thought it would be so,' cried the lady; 'you are out of humour. What, 'is this sealed-up card the grievance? 'Come, we will open it, and you shall 'know the contents.'

'Indeed I will not,' said Mr. Autumn, rising; 'I have not the least 'curiosity about the contents.—Good 'morning to you, my dear; I am going 'out.'

'Well, Benson,' said Mrs. Autumn, as soon as her husband had left the room, 'is not this a comfortable life I live? 'What a passion that poor man is in!'

'Was Mr. Autumn angry, Madam?' said Henrietta.

'To be sure he was,' said the lady; 'did you not observe it?'

'Indeed, Madam,' replied Henrietta, 'Mr. Autumn did not seem to me to be 'angry.'

'No, really!' said Mrs. Autumn; 'you have a great deal of penetration, 'it must be confessed. You think you 'are very discreet now, but you are 'mistaken. However, I charge you, 'don't gossip among your companions 'about Mr. Autumn's unhappy jealousy; I don't want the world to know 'what I suffer upon that account.'

'I never will mention it, Madam, 'to any body,' replied Henrietta.

'Nay, for that matter,' said Mrs. Autumn, 'you might mention it without 'any bad intention, by way of pitying 'me, or so; and, perhaps, I should not 'think the worse of you. But if you 'can be silent, Benson, you will oblige 'me; reports of this kind, you know, 'should not be circulated.'

'They never shall by me, Madam,' said Henrietta.

'Enough, enough,' cried Mrs. Autumn; 'I hate long speeches.'

Henrietta was pleased with a declaration which enjoined her silence; for if it be tiresome to listen to the sallies of affectation and impertinence, it is much more so to be obliged to answer them.

CHAP. IV.

GIVES THE READER HOPES OF A FAVOURABLE CHANGE IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF OUR FAIR HEROINE.

HENRIETTA had exercised her patience for some weeks in the service of Mrs. Autumn; but every day producing new instances of her folly, she resolved to quit her as soon as the countess came to town. She conceived she was in some degree accountable to that lady for her actions, since it was through her recommendation that she had been introduced to Mrs. Autumn; and she thought it necessary, for the justification of her conduct, to have so considerable a witness of it's being irreproachable.

Her lady, though she found herself always disappointed in that complaisance to her whims which she endeavoured to exact from her, yet ventured to make

her a propoſal, which her own want of delicacy hindered her from ſeeing the impropriety of.

She had taken it into her head to try her ſuppoſed lover's conſtancy; and therefore wrote a letter to him, in the character of a lady unknown, on whoſe heart he had made a deep impreſſion, but who was reſolved not to diſcover herſelf till ſhe knew whether his was wholly diſengaged.

This letter, ſhe doubted not, would produce a declaration that would afford matter of great triumph to herſelf, who ſhe ſuſpected was the ſecret object of his adoration.

She acquainted her woman with her ſcheme, and gravely deſired her to copy the letter, for Languiſh, ſhe ſaid, knew her hand.

Henrietta bluſhed with ſurprize and ſhame at this improper requeſt, and very frankly begged to be excuſed from complying with it.

'What!' ſaid Mrs. Autumn, a little confuſed, 'you diſpute my commands, then!'

'I never refuſed to obey any of your commands before, Madam,' replied Henrietta; 'but this (pardon me, Madam) appears ſo ſtrange.'

'You do not dare to ſuſpect my virtue, I hope?' ſaid Mrs. Autumn, in a lofty accent.

'It does not become me, Madam,' ſaid Henrietta, 'to cenſure your actions.'

'No, certainly,' replied the lady, 'nor to refuſe to do any thing that I order you to do: but I would fain know 'if you, in your great wiſdom, think 'there is any thing improper in this little 'piece of gallantry.'

'My opinion is of no conſequence, Madam,' replied Henrietta; 'I only 'beg to be excuſed from copying it.'

'Well, no more of the letter,' cried Mrs. Autumn, haſtily: 'perhaps I had 'only a mind to try your diſcretion; 'perhaps, too, I ſhall like you the better 'for your ſteadineſs. Be modeſt and 'reſerved, and you will be ſure of my 'approbation. Were you the beſt ſervant in the world, you would not do 'for me, unleſs you were extremely modeſt. And, now you know my mind, 'be cautious how you behave: modeſty 'is a ſure recommendation to my favour; 'I can pardon any fault in my ſervant 'but want of modeſty.'

Henrietta, from this declaration, had reaſon to think herſelf pretty ſure of her lady's favour; for the ſevereſt prude that ever declaimed againſt the monſtrous levity of her own ſex, could not have objected to the propriety of her behaviour: but, unhappily for her, ſhe was that very day guilty of a fault, by which ſhe incurred very ſhocking ſuſpicions; for having neglected to fill her lady's ſmelling-bottle with ſome freſh Eau de Luce, Mrs. Autumn declared, that ſuch heedleſſneſs muſt neceſſarily proceed from her having her thoughts continually employed upon fellows; and telling her, that ſhe could not endure ſuch a creature in her ſight, ordered her to be gone immediately.

Henrietta did not think proper to offer any anſwer to this ſtrange charge; but quitting her preſence immediately, and her houſe a few moments afterwards, ſhe returned to Mrs. Willis, who, ſeeing her alight at her door, eagerly flew to receive her.

'I have great news for you, my dear 'Miſs,' ſaid ſhe: 'I was this moment 'preparing to ſet out in a coach to bring 'you a letter, which was left here by 'one of your uncle's ſervants. It is 'very true,' purſued ſhe, ſeeing Henrietta look ſurprized. 'I aſked the 'young man, who he came from? and 'he ſaid, the Earl of ——. You may 'believe I am impatient to know the 'contents of this letter. Come, my 'dear, and read it; I hope all your 'troubles are over now.'

Henrietta receiving the letter from her, which ſhe took out of her pocket, followed her into the parlour, and breaking the ſeal—

'It is my uncle's hand, indeed,' ſaid ſhe, 'and this is what he writes:'

'Mrs. Courteney is deſired to call at 'the Earl of ——'s, to-morrow morning 'at twelve o'clock: he has ſomething to 'propoſe to her for her advantage.'

'Did I not tell you, Miſs,' ſaid Mrs. Willis, exultingly, 'that the ſtep you 'had taken would produce a favourable 'change in your fortune?'

'Don't be too ſanguine in your ex'pectations, my dear Mrs. Willis,' ſaid Miſs Courteney; 'who knows but my 'uncle may have another Sir Iſaac Darby 'to propoſe to me? However, I will cer'tainly wait upon him, and, if poſſible, 'will be punctual to the hour he has 'preſcribed me; but if nothing ſhould

'come

'come of this overture of his lordſhip's, 'I ſhall be your gueſt again for ſome 'time. I have left Mrs. Autumn.'

She then related to her ſome circumſtances of that lady's extravagant folly, and the cauſe and manner of their parting; which, together with their comments on Lord ——'s meſſage, furniſhed them with matter ſufficient for diſcourſe during the remainder of that day. What happened to our fair heroine the next, will be found in the following chapter.

CHAP. V.

DESTROYS THE EXPECTATIONS RAISED BY THE FOREGOING CHAPTER.

HENRIETTA was at her uncle's houſe exactly at the hour preſcribed her; and, upon ſending in her name, was deſired to walk into his lordſhip's library.

The earl was there to receive her: he had with him two of his daughters; but theſe young ladies withdrew immediately, after ſaluting her in a very diſtant manner, which ſhe returned with equal reſerve and coldneſs.

'Miſs Courteney,' ſaid his lordſhip, as ſoon as they were alone, 'I have 'been very angry with you for leaving 'your aunt in the ſtrange manner you 'did.'

'I am extremely obliged to your 'lordſhip,' replied Henrietta, 'for taking ſo much intereſt in any thing that 'concerns me.'

'You certainly acted very indiſcreetly,' ſaid the earl; 'but what is paſt 'cannot be helped. You have had the 'good luck to make yourſelf friends, 'notwithſtanding this wrong ſtep. You 'have been at the counteſs of ——'s 'ſeat, I hear.'

'Yes, my lord,' anſwered Henrietta; 'I was there with ——'

'The counteſs is very much your 'friend,' interrupted his lordſhip, haſtily, 'but her ſon is more ſo.'

Henrietta bluſhed, and was ſilent.

'I will not,' purſued his lordſhip, 'examine into your motives for leaving 'Lady Meadows; but I will, if poſſible, 'accommodate matters between you, 'provided you will concur with me in 'my endeavours for that purpoſe.'

'I deſire nothing more earneſtly than 'to be reconciled to my aunt,' replied Henrietta.

'I believe it will be your own fault 'if you are not,' reſumed his lordſhip; 'and if you recover her favour, your 'good fortune will not ſtop there. To 'keep you no longer in ſuſpence, then, 'Lord B—— has declared a paſſion for 'you, has ſolicited my intereſt towards 'effecting a reconciliation between your 'aunt and you, that he may pay his addreſſes to you in a proper manner.'

'I am ſurprized that Lord B—— 'ſhould make ſuch a propoſal,' ſaid Henrietta; 'he is engaged to the daughter of a rich citizen.'

'No, not engaged,' replied the earl; 'the match has been propoſed, and he 'has viſited the young woman.'

'Indeed, my lord,' replied Henrietta, 'the affair is much farther advanced.'

'Well, well,' interrupted his lordſhip, 'we will ſuppoſe that the writings 'are drawn and every thing ſettled; 'but they are not married, nor engaged 'neither.

'His inclinations, you find, have 'taken another turn: you have no reaſon to blame him for this, I am ſure; 'and it would be ſtrange indeed, if a 'man of his rank and fortune was to 'mind the cenſures of the vulgar.'

Henrietta was ſilent. His lordſhip proceeded.

'Lord B—— will find it difficult, no 'doubt, to prevail upon the earl to 'break off this treaty, and conſent to 'his marrying you, though Lady Meadows ſhould offer to make you her 'heir; becauſe in that caſe your fortune 'would be ſtill leſs than that of this citizen, whom he has choſen for him. 'Nevertheleſs, he does not deſpair of 'effecting this, provided your aunt will 'do for you what it is expected ſhe 'would before you was ſo unhappy as 'to diſoblige her. In this Lord B—— 'ſufficiently ſhews the ſincerity and ardour of his paſſion. It is your part 'now to convince him that you are not 'ungrateful.'

'What would your lordſhip have me 'to do?' ſaid Henrietta.

'I would have you ſubmit to your 'aunt,' ſaid the earl, 'and regain her 'affection, if poſſible. Lord B—— has 'reaſon to expect this compliance from 'you.'

'I will do every thing I ought to do,' replied Henrietta, 'to recover my aunt's 'favour, and this without any view to 'Lord B——'s offers.'

'Well, we shall not examine too 'nicely into that matter,' interrupted his lordship, smiling. 'All that remains to be done, is this: I will see 'Lady Meadows myself; she will be in 'town soon, I suppose; Lord B——'s 'proposal, which I will acquaint her 'with, will captivate her attention, and 'be your best justification. As for what 'little concessions she may expect from 'you, I shall leave them to be settled by 'yourselves.'

'There are certain concessions, however,' said Henrietta, 'which it is impossible for me to make, and which, if 'my aunt insists upon as the necessary 'conditions of a reconciliation between 'us, I must still continue under her displeasure, and hazard all the consequences of it.'

'I am afraid you are going to say 'some silly thing or other,' interrupted his lordship, rising from his seat; which motion Henrietta understanding as a hint for her to hasten her departure, rose also.

'I will detain your lordship no longer,' said she, 'than just to tell you, that some 'time ago my aunt proposed to me to 'settle all her fortune upon me, provided 'I would embrace the Roman-catholick 'religion.'

'A noble offer, upon my honour!' said his lordship; 'and did you refuse 'it?'

'Would your lordship have had me 'accept of it?' said Henrietta.

'What signifies what I would have 'had you do?' replied the earl, peevishly. 'What did the consideration of 'your own interest suggest to you?'

'To refuse it, my lord,' answered Henrietta, 'and I did so.'

'I find you are a very romantick girl,' said his lordship; 'I am resolved to trouble myself no more about your affairs.'

'I hope it will not be imputed to me 'as a crime,' said Henrietta, 'that I 'could not be bribed to change my religion.'

'Change your religion!' repeated the earl, 'what necessity was there for changing your religion? You might have 'humoured the old woman, have gone 'with her to mass, and conformed to 'some of her superstitious ceremonies, 'and be a good Protestant in your heart 'notwithstanding; the world, knowing 'your motives, would have commended 'you for such a prudent conduct. I see 'there is nothing to be done with you,' pursued he, after a little pause. 'For 'the sake of the unfortunate man, who 'was your father, I would have been 'glad to have seen you well married; 'but Lord B—— is not such a fool as 'to take you without a fortune; and, 'as you cannot reasonably have any expectations but from Lady Meadows, 'who has no children, and may leave 'her fortune to whom she pleases, without doing any body injustice, you know 'best whether it is worth your while to 'make a proper submission to her or 'not.'

'I will never make an improper one,' said Henrietta.

'To be sure,' said his lordship, 'your 'own wisdom is to be judge of that.'

'No, my lord,' replied Henrietta; 'you shall, if you please, be judge—if 'my conscience—'

'Pray, let me hear nothing about 'your conscience,' interrupted the earl; 'it is not my business to set matters even 'between you and your conscience; 'your aunt's popish confessor, who is 'likely to be her heir, is skilful in those 'things: yet I would not advise you to 'consult him neither, for he is an interested person; but remember, that 'you may either secure to yourself a 'good estate, and marry a very deserving young nobleman, or continue in 'the obscurity and want your father left 'you in, which is all the legacy he bequeathed you. Think well of this, 'and then let your conscience determine. 'I do not advise you to do any thing 'against it.'

'My resolution is already fixed,' said Henrietta: 'my conscience will neither 'permit me to change my religion, nor 'to counterfeit a change of it.'

'Do you insinuate by that,' said his lordship, hastily, 'that I advised you to 'do either the one or the other?'

'My aunt already knows my mind,' said Henrietta, evading a question which she could not answer truly without offending him: 'I have nothing to hope 'for from your lordship's interposition, 'unless she has been pleased to give up 'this point; and I shall chearfully return to that poverty my father be-

'queathed

'queathed me, since, with it, he be-
'queathed me piety and virtue.'

'It is a pity he did not leave you
'prudence also,' said the earl, who found something very provoking in this last speech; 'you would not then have 'disobliged your aunt by your scandalous elopement from her, which has 'reduced you to the miserable condition 'you are now in, so that your friends 'know not how to take notice of you.'

'Friends! my lord,' replied Henrietta, rising in her temper; 'I have no 'friends, I have only relations.'

'That is likely to be their misfor-
'tune,' said his lordship, who was very angry at this sarcasm: 'your undutiful-
'ness to your aunt makes you un-
'worthy of the notice of your relations; 'and I declare to you plainly, that from 'this moment I will never concern my-
'self about you.'

Henrietta disdained to make any answer to this unjust and cruel speech: but curtsied in silence, and withdrew; leaving the earl very well satisfied with himself for the tender and parental part he had acted towards his brother's daughter, and furnished with excellent reasons for never seeing her more.

'I had provided a match for her,' said he, that very evening, to an humble friend, who he knew would not fail to spread the report, 'not unworthy of a 'daughter of my own. She rejected my 'proposal. She refused to make any 'submission to her aunt, whom I would 'have prevailed upon to be reconciled 'to her. Let her suffer the consequen-
'ces of her obstinacy and folly; I have 'done all that I ought to do, and am 'justified to the world.'

His lordship forgot to add, that the submission which was expected from her was nothing more than the change of her religion, and the match she so obstinately refused could not be effected without she purchased a fortune by an impious hypocrisy. Nevertheless, the omission of these trifling circumstances gave such a colour to Henrietta's behaviour, that she was considered by all who heard her uncle's account of it, as an unhappy young creature, who would ruin herself, and be the blot of a noble family.

As for our fair heroine, she foresaw that her uncle would justify his neglect of her at her expence. She had every thing against her; rank, fortune, power; that general prejudice which prevails against the unfortunate, and that as general servility which adopts the passions of the great. But these reflections filled her with no uneasy apprehensions; for there is this advantage in virtue, that it is sufficient for itself, and needs not the applause or support of others; it's own consciousness is it's best reward.

CHAP. VI.

IN WHICH LORD B—— SHEWS HIMSELF A TRUE MODERN LOVER.

HENRIETTA, before she went home, waited upon Lady D——, to acquaint her that she had left Mrs. Autumn. She avoided mentioning that lady's peculiarities, which had made it impossible to please her; but with great simplicity related the error she had been guilty of, and the suspicions she had incurred by it, which occasioned her dismission.

Lady D—— diverted herself for some time with the extreme delicacy of her whimsical friend; and then told Henrietta, that having still a good opinion of her prudence and modesty, notwithstanding the reasons Mrs. Autumn had to suspect her, she would place her about a young lady, a relation of her own.

Henrietta thanked her in very respectful terms, and took her leave, after she had, at Lady D——'s desire, left her a direction to her lodgings, that she might know where to send for her when it was necessary.

At her return, she found the faithful Mrs. Willis full of anxious impatience to hear the success of her visit to the earl. Henrietta, through respect to her uncle, concealed the greatest part of his discourse to her, but owned that she had no expectations from him.

Mrs. Willis shrugged up her shoulders: 'Then it was as you suspected,' said she; 'your uncle has proposed some 'absurd match to you, and you have 'forfeited his future favour by not 'complying with it.'

'You will be surprized to hear that 'Lord B—— has made an application 'to my uncle,' said Henrietta.

'Surprized!' repeated Mrs. Willis; 'why, to be sure: considering how your 'affairs are circumstanced, this is a ge-
'nerous

'nerous way of proceeding. Well, I 'hope you begin now to have a favour-'able opinion both of his love and ho-'nour.'

'I am sure I think highly of his pru-'dence,' replied Henrietta, smiling. 'Only mark the caution with which he 'acts in this affair: my poverty gave 'him hopes that I should be an easy con-'quest; and that passion which first ma-'nifested itself in an open attempt upon 'my honour, sought afterwards to al-'lure me with bribes. It is not strange 'that persons who hold money to be the 'greatest good, should think it more 'than an equivalent for virtue. Here, 'however, he was disappointed again, 'to his great astonishment, no doubt, 'and marriage is this honourable lover's 'last resource; but this he does not offer 'till he is sure I shall have a fortune, if 'not equal to that of my rival the packer's 'daughter, yet at least sufficient to jus-'tify his choice in the opinion of the 'prudential part of the world; and per-'haps he expects I should purchase the 'mighty blessing of his hand by the sa-'crifice, the temporary sacrifice at least, 'of those principles for which I have 'already suffered so much.'

'Have you any reason for this shock-'ing suspicion?' interrupted Mrs. Wil-lis.

'I think I have,' replied Henrietta: 'a reconciliation with my aunt is, it 'seems, a necessary preliminary to his 'addresses; and yet he heard from my-'self upon what condition that recon-'ciliation could only be effected.' Henrietta, suddenly interrupting herself, cried out—'There he is; there is Lord 'B——.'

'Where? where?' said Mrs. Willis, running to the window. 'It is certainly 'he,' said Henrietta; 'he passed by in 'a chair.'

That instant they heard a loud rap at the door.

'As I live,' cried Mrs. Willis, in a violent flutter, 'he is come to visit you. 'I hope you will see him, Miss Cour-'teney: hear what he has to say, pray 'do; there can be no harm in that, I 'am sure.'

'Well, well,' said Henrietta, smil-ing at her solicitude, 'I will see him; 'let him be shewn into the other parlour, 'if you please.'

Mrs. Willis, curious to see this young lord, went herself to open the door. He bolted out of the chair; and, with a look and accent full of impatience, asked her, if the young lady that lodged there was at home?

'Miss Courteney, Sir?' said Mrs. Willis.

'Yes,' replied he, hastily; 'is she 'at home? can I see her? Pray tell her 'a gentleman from ——— enquires for 'her.'

Mrs. Willis desired him to walk into the parlour; said she would acquaint the young lady with his being there; and, a few moments afterwards, Henrietta appeared.

Lord B—— flew to meet her, with the air of a lover conscious of the right he had to be well received; and taking her hand, which he respectfully kissed—

'Now,' cried he, exultingly, 'can 'you doubt the ardour of my passion 'for you? and will you not at length 'confess that it is possible for a man to 'deserve you?'

'Certainly, my lord,' replied Hen-rietta, 'it is very possible.'

'May I perish if I think so!' said he; 'but how poorly would words express 'my adoration of you! Judge of the 'purity, the ardour of my love, by 'what I have done to make you mine. 'Have you not seen your uncle, Miss 'Courteney?'

'I have, my lord,' replied Henrietta.

'You have!' repeated his lordship; 'and in that grave, cold accent, too! 'Surely my sentiments and designs are 'still unknown to you: it is impossible 'else that you should be thus insensible, 'nay ungrateful, I will say—for I have 'given no common proofs of love, I 'think.'

'Indeed, my lord,' replied Henrietta, who had a mind to teaze this generous lover a little, 'you shall not suffer for 'your noble disinterestedness—you shall 'not resign Miss Cordwain and her im-'mense fortune for me.'

'Name not her fortune,' cried Lord B——; 'were it millions I would re-'fuse it for you.'

'Nay, now your lordship is quite 'romantick,' said Henrietta, 'to pre-'fer to a rich heiress an unhappy young 'woman, deserted by her relations, and 'reduced to seek a subsistence by her la-'bour.'

'Call not my passion romantick.' in-terrupted

terrupted Lord B——, 'because it soars 'above common conceptions: a mind so 'elevated as yours might give it a juster 'epithet.'

'Were my aunt,' pursued Henrietta, 'to leave me her whole estate, you would 'still make no inconsiderable sacrifice 'by quitting Miss Cordwain for me, 'since my fortune would then be in-'ferior to her's. But you know, my 'lord, I have no expectations from Lady 'Meadows: I have declared to my uncle 'the hard conditions upon which she 'offers to make me her heir, conditions 'that I never will accept of; and there-'fore I may well call your passion ro-'mantick, when, under such circum-'stances, you could think of making 'an application to my uncle.'

'To be sure, Madam,' said Lord B——, whose countenance expressed at once surprize, confusion, and disappoint-ment, 'I did apply to the earl, not 'personally indeed. I contrived it so 'that a friend of mine, who is very in-'timate with his lordship, should give 'him a hint of your situation, and the 'sentiments I entertained for you: and, 'from the account my friend gave me 'of his success in his negotiation, I con-'ceived that you might be prevailed 'upon—that is, that you would con-'sider. For might I not hope, my dear 'Miss Courteney, that you would not 'be insensible of my affection?'

Here his lordship paused, and looked on Henrietta with a languishing air, seeming to wish and expect that her ten-derness would spare him a farther ex-planation; but our fair heroine, who did not chuse to collect his meaning from the abrupt and unconnected sentences he had uttered, continued maliciously silent, as if she waited for the end of his discourse.

'I see,' resumed he, 'that I have not 'been happy enough to inspire you with 'any tender sentiments for me. Par-'don me, Miss Courteney, but I must 'be so free as to tell you that, if you 'were not prepossessed in favour of 'another person, the proofs I have given 'you of my affection would not be re-'ceived with such indifference.'

'There needs not any such prepos-'session,' replied Henrietta, vexed at this hint, 'to make me receive with in-'difference the proofs you have hitherto 'given me of that affection your lord-'ship boasts of. Am I to reckon among 'these proofs, my lord, the insult you 'offered me at Mrs. Eccles's, and the 'strange declaration you made me in 'the country?'

'Ah, how cruel is this recapitulation 'now!' cried Lord B——: 'do I not 'do justice to your birth, your beauty 'and virtue, by my present honourable 'intentions?'

'It is not enough for me, my lord,' said Henrietta, 'that your intentions 'are honourable now; to have merited 'my esteem, they should always have 'been so: but, to speak plainly, I am 'still doubtful of your intentions.'

'Doubtful still of my intentions!' re-peated Lord B——: 'have I not de-'clared them to your uncle, Madam? 'have I not solicited his interest with 'you?'

'Suppose that obtained, my lord,' said Henrietta, 'and that it has all the 'weight with me you could wish.'

'Why, then, we shall be happy, my 'angel,' cried he, taking her hand, and pressing it to his lips. 'You will be 'reconciled to your aunt, and I may 'hope for my father's consent to our 'union.'

'A reconciliation with my aunt is 'impossible,' said Henrietta, withdraw-ing her hand.

'Say not that it is impossible,' replied Lord B——, 'but that you have not 'complaisance enough for me to attempt 'it.'

'Did I not know it to be impossible,' resumed Henrietta, 'I would attempt it 'for my own sake; but nothing less 'than the sacrifice of my religion will 'satisfy my aunt: on this condition in-'deed she promises to settle her whole 'estate upon me; I think I once told 'your lordship so.'

'You did, my dear Miss Courteney,' interrupted Lord B——; 'and I adore 'you for your steady adherence to your 'principles.'

Henrietta was a little startled at so un-expected a declaration; but Lord B—— did not suffer her to remain long in the error his last words had occasioned.

'If Lady Meadows was not such a 'bigot,' pursued he, 'excuse my free-'dom, Miss, we might expect that she 'would receive my proposals with plea-'sure, and make such concessions in fa-'vour of her niece, as might engage my 'father's consent to our marriage: but 'since this is hopeless, is it reason-'able that you should be the victim of

'her

'her obstinacy? By seeming only to 'comply with your aunt's desires, all 'obstacles to our union will be removed; 'a temporary compliance is all that is 'necessary to secure to you a fortune, 'and a rank in life suitable to your birth. 'Do not imagine that I wish to see you 'a proselyte to the religion she professes: 'no, if any thing could weaken my 'passion, your being capable of such a 'change, upon interested motives, would 'do it. I love you; I repeat it again, 'I love you for your piety.'

'Then, to be sure, my lord,' replied Henrietta, 'you think that a little 'dissimulation in this case would be a 'virtue.'

'In your circumstances,' resumed Lord B——, 'it certainly would; for 'while your principles are unchanged, 'what do you sacrifice, in yielding to 'your aunt, but externals only? This 'sacrifice your interest, your happiness, 'demands of you: let me add also, that 'you owe it to a man who loves you 'with the ardour I do. And surely, 'to industriously seek occasions of suf-'fering for a religion, which, if you 'could be contented with secretly pro-'fessing, you would be happy yourself, 'and make others happy also, is to give 'the world reason to suspect that ostenta-'tion has a greater share in your resolves 'than piety. Therefore, my dear Miss 'Courteney, you see it is not the sacrifice 'of your religion that I require of you, 'but of the reputation of suffering for 'it.'

'Well, my lord,' replied Henrietta, who had listened to him with great calmness, 'if ever I was in doubt of your 'intentions, you have clearly explained 'them now: of them, and of the sen-'timents you have avowed, you may 'collect my opinion, when I declare 'to you, that if you had worlds to 'bestow on me, I would not be your 'wife.'

'Is this your resolution, Miss Courteney?' said his lordship.

'It is, my lord,' she replied: 'a 'resolution justifiable upon your own 'great principle, interest. It is my in-'terest I consult, when I prefer poverty 'and servitude to the fortune my aunt 'can give me; because the silent testi-'mony of a quiet conscience is, in my 'opinion, of infinitely more value than 'riches. It is interest by which I am 'influenced, when I refuse your offered 'alliance, because I am sure I could not 'be happy with a man whom I cannot 'esteem.'

'Hold, Madam, hold,' interrupted Lord B——, 'this is too much: I have 'not deserved this treatment; but I 'thank you for it; yes, from my soul 'I thank you for it; it has helped to re-'store my senses. I have been foolish, 'very foolish, I confess.'

His lordship, indeed, looked foolish enough when he pronounced these words, which were succeeded by a pause of several minutes: then suddenly starting from his seat, and bowing with an affected negligence—

'The best apology I can make, Ma-'dam,' said he, 'for the importunate 'visit I have paid you, is to assure you 'I never will repeat it.'

Henrietta curtsied gravely without answering him; and having rung the bell for a servant to attend him to the door, went into the room where her friend was sitting. Lord B—— stopped, looked back, and, finding she had withdrawn, he rushed out hastily, and flung himself into his chair, glad of his escape, and congratulating himself upon the victory he had gained over his passion; for, in the first emotions of his grief at parting, he had almost resolved to declare he would marry her without any fortune: but her disappearing so suddenly, gave him time for a moment's reflection, and that was sufficient to hinder him from being guilty of an imprudence which he now trembled at the thoughts of.

It is so difficult for mean and selfish persons to conceive that any thing but private advantage can influence the resolutions of others, that, notwithstanding the proof Henrietta had given of her attachment to her religion, and her inviolable regard to truth, yet still Lord B—— supposed there must be some other latent motive for a conduct, in his opinion, highly ridiculous, and very inconsistent with that good sense which it was apparent she possessed.

Sometimes he fancied he had a rival; and then, to clear a doubt so tormenting, he was upon the point of returning to her, to offer her his hand upon her own conditions: but his avarice restrained him from making so dangerous a trial; she might accept his offer; and, with all the passion he felt for her, he could not resolve to marry her without a fortune.

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To ſtifle a thought which ſuggeſted to him deſigns ſo deſtructive to his intereſt, he endeavoured to perſuade himſelf that her obſtinacy, in refuſing to temporize a little when ſuch mighty advantages were in view, was the effect of female vanity, which ſought diſtinction at the expence of ſolid happineſs. In this opinion he was confirmed by his friend, whom he had employed to ſound the earl her uncle with regard to his propoſals, and to whom he now communicated the reſult of his interview with Henrietta.

'Depend upon it,' ſaid this ſagacious perſon, 'your goddeſs will deſcend 'from her romantick flights, when ſhe 'finds ſhe has almoſt ſoared out of hu-'man ken; and is much more likely to 'be laughed at for her extravagant folly, 'than admired and applauded for her 'extraordinary piety. Follow my ad-'vice,' purſued he, 'ſuffer your miſtreſs 'to believe you have broke her chains; 'if intereſt does not make her wiſh to 'recal you, vanity will. Few women 'can endure that a lover ſhould eſ-'cape them; and, to recover their in-'fluence, they often make conceſſions, 'which, in the zenith of their power, 'they would have thought impoſſible.'

Lord B—— improved a little upon his friend's ſcheme, and reſolved to continue his addreſſes to Miſs Cordwain, to pique Henrietta, he ſaid; but, in reality, he was as much in love with her fortune, as with the perſon of our fair heroine; and was not willing to hazard the loſs of the one, while it was yet doubtful whether he ſhould ever poſſeſs the other.

CHAP. VII.

WHICH CONCLUDES THE FOURTH BOOK OF THIS HISTORY.

HENRIETTA having acquainted Mrs. Willis with what had paſſed in her interview with Lord B——, the good woman, who had flattered herſelf that the affair would have ended more happily (though more honourably it could not) for her fair friend, conjured her, with tears of anxious tenderneſs, not to think of going to ſervice again, but to allow the counteſs, whom her conduct with regard to her ſon muſt neceſſarily oblige very highly, to employ her good offices with Lady Meadows in her favour, that a reconciliation might be effected, without thoſe ſhocking conditions which had at firſt been propoſed to her.

'If I thought ſuch an application 'would be ſucceſsful,' replied Henrietta, 'I would readily conſent to it. 'For you may eaſily imagine, my dear 'Mrs. Willis, that this low condition 'is not my choice: but I know my 'aunt's temper; whatever ſhe deſires, 'ſhe deſires with ardour; and makes a 'merit of perſiſting obſtinately in a re-'ſolution ſhe has once formed. Her 'pride will be a more powerful advocate 'for me than any thing the counteſs 'can urge; to that I formerly owed my 'deliverance from dependence, more 'mortifying than ſervitude. This pride 'will no doubt be ſenſibly wounded, 'when ſhe finds that I am determined 'in my choice; if any thing can make 'her recede from her purpoſe, it will be 'the ſhame of ſeeing her niece reduced ſo 'low. But ſurely it is not the way to 'convince her I am really determined, 'if I allow my friends to teaze her with 'ſolicitations, when ſhe has already de-'clared her reſolution in ſuch ſtrong 'terms: ſhe will believe that I have en-'gaged them to make this trial; ſhe will 'be offended with their interpoſition, 'and perhaps be the leſs inclined to raiſe 'me from this obſcure condition, as ſhe 'will not have the merit of doing it from 'her own generoſity and tenderneſs, but 'at the inſtances of others. Time only, 'my dear Mrs. Willis, can produce any 'favourable change in my circumſtan-'ces; it will either ſoften the hearts of 'my relations, or it will blunt my ſenſe 'of the meanneſs of my condition, by 'familiarizing me to it. This I am ſure 'of at leaſt, that, in the conſciouſneſs 'of doing right, I ſhall always find an 'unfailing ſource of happineſs, however 'Providence may think fit to diſpoſe of 'me.'

'Ah, never doubt but you are the 'care of Providence, my dear Miſs,' cried Mrs. Willis: 'ſuch virtue and 'piety muſt ſooner or later be happy; 'Heaven and your own prudence direct 'you.'

'I have not always been prudent,' ſaid Henrietta, ſighing; 'but misfor-'tunes, as you once told me, teach us 'wiſdom.'

Mrs. Willis, obſerving an unuſual

penſiveneſs ſtealing over the ſweet features of Henrietta on this reflection, changed the diſcourſe to a leſs intereſting ſubject, and employed her utmoſt aſſiduity and tenderneſs to make the time ſhe ſtayed with her paſs agreeably.

A week being elapſed, and no meſſage coming from Lady D——, Henrietta began to apprehend that ſhe ſhould be diſappointed of a place, in which ſhe expected more ſatisfaction than ſhe had found in thoſe ſhe had hitherto been in, when ſhe was ſurprized with a viſit from the Counteſs of ——.

She flew to receive her with reſpectful joy. The lady tenderly preſſed her hand.

'I had buſineſs in the city,' ſaid ſhe, 'and I took this opportunity to call on 'you—And how do you do, my dear 'good girl?' purſued ſhe; 'have you 'any agreeable news to tell me? has 'your family relented yet?'

'I have no reaſon to think they have, 'Madam,' replied Henrietta.

'Shocking inſenſibility!' exclaimed the counteſs, lifting up her eyes; 'you 'have been very ill uſed too by Mrs. 'Autumn, my ſiſter tells me.'

Henrietta ſmiled, but was ſilent.

'Well, Miſs Courteney,' reſumed the counteſs, 'will you come and live with 'me as my friend and companion? I 'know your generous ſcorn of dependence; but it is the unworthineſs of 'the donor only, that can make benefits 'ſit heavy on a mind like yours: there 'is often as much greatneſs of ſoul in 'receiving as in conferring benefits; 'and when true friendſhip is the motive 'for giving, it is pride, not generoſity, 'to refuſe.'

'Do me the juſtice to believe, Madam,' replied Henrietta, 'that I re'ceive this inſtance of your goodneſs 'with the deepeſt gratitude; but there 'is——'

'I underſtand you,' interrupted the counteſs—'my ſon; but I hope, when 'he is married, you will have no ob'jection to living with me as my friend.'

The counteſs, in ſpeaking theſe words, looked earneſtly on Henrietta.

'No, certainly, Madam,' cried ſhe, eagerly; 'I ſhall think myſelf happy in 'living with you in any ſituation.'

'I know not what to think of my 'ſon's conduct in this affair,' reſumed the counteſs; 'every thing is ſettled between my lord and the young lady's 'father; but he ſtill finds pretences to 'delay the match.' Her eyes, as ſhe pronounced theſe words, ſeemed to demand an explanation of Henrietta.

'I am afraid, Madam,' replied ſhe, 'that I have been partly the cauſe of 'theſe delays.'

'That is candidly ſaid,' interrupted the counteſs; 'have you ſeen my ſon 'lately?'

'I have, Madam,' anſwered Henrietta; 'but your ladyſhip may be en'tirely eaſy.'

'Eaſy!' repeated the counteſs; 'why 'do you imagine that I am ſo inſenſible 'of your merit?—But you know, my 'good girl, Lord B—— is in honour 'engaged to Miſs Cordwain.'

'His lordſhip's partiality for me,' ſaid Henrietta, 'has induced him to 'carry this matter farther than (as he is 'circumſtanced) I think he ſhould have 'done. He has cauſed my uncle to be 'applied to; but this has produced no'thing, Madam. I told Lord B—— 'upon what conditions my aunt had 'offered to ſettle her eſtate upon me; 'and his lordſhip is convinced that I 'cannot comply with them. My reſolution is fixed, my Lord-B—— knows 'it is ſo, and you have no hing to fear 'Madam, from any imprudence on his 'ſide, or any ungenerosity on mine. I 'ventured to promiſe that I would deſerve the confidence you was pleaſed 'to place in me on this occaſion, and I 'hope I have and ſhall continue to deſerve it.'

Notwithſtanding the delicate manner in which Henrietta ſtated the affair between her and Lord B——, yet the counteſs diſcovered that her ſon had ſhewn more prudence than generoſity, or even love, in his behaviour; and, by a ſtrange contradiction in the human heart, ſhe at once approved and condemned, was pleaſed with, yet aſhamed of his conduct; but, charmed with Henrietta's noble diſintereſtedneſs, her candour and ſincerity, ſhe embraced her with the tenderneſs of a mother, and perhaps with the more tenderneſs becauſe it was not likely ſhe ſhould be her mother.

'I am impatient,' ſaid ſhe, 'till I 'can have you with me, that I may have 'it in my power to ſhew you how greatly 'I both love and eſteem you.'

Henrietta thanked her with great politeneſs;

liteneſs; and then told her of Lady D——'s intentions to recommend her to a young lady, a relation of her's.

'Oh! Miſs Belmour, you mean,' ſaid the counteſs; 'my ſiſter mentioned 'it to me: ſhe is an agreeable young 'woman, has a very good fortune, and 'is entirely miſtreſs of herſelf. She will 'be much better pleaſed to receive you 'in the character of a companion than a 'ſervant, when ſhe knows your birth 'and merit.'

'I will owe obligations of that kind 'to none but yourſelf, Madam,' replied Henrietta; 'and I beg this young lady 'may know no more of me than what 'is juſt neceſſary to recommend me to 'her good opinion as a ſervant.'

The counteſs conteſted this point with her for ſome time; but finding her not to be diſſuaded from her deſign, 'Well,' ſaid ſhe, kindly, 'you ſhall be indulged 'this once, but remember I claim your 'promiſe to come to me when a certain 'objection is removed; in the mean time 'we will ſettle you with Miſs Belmour 'in the way you chuſe. She will be 'with my ſiſter to-morrow morning; 'and if you come likewiſe, Lady D— 'will introduce you to her.'

Henrietta ſaid ſhe would not fail to attend Lady D——. Upon which the counteſs roſe up, kiſſed her at parting, and deſired ſhe would look upon her as one of her moſt faithful friends.

Our fair heroine had reaſon to be ſatisfied with the kind manner in which Lady D—— recommended her to Miſs Belmour, as well as with the reception that young lady gave her. She carried her home with her in her coach, and behaved to her with an affability that Henrietta could no otherwiſe account for, than by ſuppoſing the counteſs had diſcovered her true name and circumſtances to her. In this, however, ſhe was miſtaken: her young miſtreſs was in love; ſhe had occaſion for a confident. Henrietta's youth and gentleneſs promiſed her ſhe would be an indulgent one: beſides, her good ſenſe and the elegance of her perſon and behaviour ſo leſſened the diſtance between the miſtreſs and ſervant, that her pride was not wounded by the familiarity with which ſhe condeſcended to treat her, as the neceſſary prelude to the confidence ſhe was reſolved to repoſe in her.

Henrietta liſtened with complaiſance to the overflowings of a heart tender by nature, and wholly poſſeſſed, as ſhe thought, by a deſerving object; but when Miſs Belmour, in the courſe of frequent converſations on this exhauſtleſs theme, gave her to underſtand that this lover of whom ſhe boaſted was the huſband of another lady, from whom he had been parted ſeveral years, ſurprize, horror, grief, were ſo ſtrongly impreſſed on her countenance, that her lady began to repent of a confeſſion ſhe had made, in full confidence that her ſentiments, whatever they were, muſt needs be approved by her ſervant.

But it being now uſeleſs as well as dangerous to retract what ſhe had ſaid, ſhe was under a neceſſity of ſubmitting to the mortifying taſk of defending her conduct to one whoſe duty as well as intereſt ſhe had a moment before conceived it to be, to acquieſce in, or rather applaud all ſhe did.

She began with telling Henrietta, that Mr. Morley had, when very young, been forced, by an avaricious father, to marry a woman whom he could not love, and with whom he had been ſo miſerable, that a ſeparation was agreed to by the relations on both ſides.

Henrietta ſighed ſympathetically at this account. Miſs Belmour, encouraged by this mark of her ſenſibility, proceeded, with great fluency of language, to expatiate on the reſiſtleſs power of love: her lover's ſophiſtry had furniſhed her with arguments to prove, that the marriage he had been forced into was not binding in the ſight of Heaven, and that he was at liberty to beſtow his affections elſewhere. She treated marriage as a mere human inſtitution, adopted the ſentiments of Eloiſa, talked of an union of hearts, eternal conſtancy, generous confidence. Henrietta heard her with patience; but being out of breath at laſt, ſhe ſtopped, and ſeemed to expect a reply.

Our fair heroine, with all the humility becoming her ſtation, but at the ſame time with all the firmneſs of virtue, oppoſed the ſpecious arguments ſhe had urged, with others which reaſon, religion, and the purity of her own ſentiments, ſuggeſted to her: theſe, however, made very little impreſſion on Miſs Belmour. She yawned, ſmiled contemptuouſly, and was ſeveral times ready to interrupt her with an authoritative air, but refrained, from the conſideration that her woman was now, by the participation of

her ſecret, become her companion, if not ſomething more.

Henrietta, deſpairing to reſcue her unhappy miſtreſs, by motives of piety, from the ſnares that were laid for her, ſought even to intereſt her paſſions in the cauſe of virtue.

'You depend, Madam,' purſued ſhe, 'upon your lover's conſtancy; but what 'ſecurity can you have that he will be 'conſtant?'

'What ſecurity!' interrupted Miſs Belmour, rouſed to attention by ſo intereſting a queſtion; 'his vows.'

'Theſe vows, Madam,' ſaid Henrietta, 'will expire with the paſſion that 'cauſed them: he will be conſtant as 'long as he loves, but how long he will 'love, is the doubt.'

'I am really vain enough to imagine,' replied Miſs Belmour, bridling, 'that 'thoſe few attractions I have received 'from nature, ſince they have gained, 'will fix his heart: I am quite free from 'any apprehenſions of that ſort, I can 'aſſure you.'

'You have charms, Madam,' ſaid Henrietta, 'that entitle you to a worthier 'conqueſt than of a man who, not having it in his power to marry you, yet 'diſhonourably ſeeks to enſnare your 'affections.'

'It is natural to wiſh to be beloved 'by thoſe we love,' replied Miſs Belmour: 'I am convinced Mr. Morley 'loves me.'

'If he loved you ſincerely, Madam,' ſaid Henriettta, 'he would not make 'you unhappy; true love never ſeeks the 'ruin of it's object: diſintereſtedneſs is 'the teſt of love; try Mr. Morley's by 'that.'

'Mr. Morley has no mean, ſelfiſh 'deſigns, upon my fortune,' cried Miſs Belmour.

'His deſigns are mean and ſelfiſh in 'the higheſt degree,' replied Henrietta, 'ſince he expects that to make him happy 'you ſhould ſacrifice your peace, your 'honour, and your reputation; and 'ſhould he ſucceed in theſe deſigns, 'which Heaven forbid, the neglect he 'will ſoon treat you with will convince 'you, that love, when not founded on 'eſteem, cannot be laſting: for the contempt which even libertines feel for 'thoſe whom they have ſeduced, is a 'proof of that ſecret homage which all 'men pay to virtue.'

'If I thought Mr. Morley would ever 'fail in the reſpect and adoration he pays 'me now,' ſaid Miſs Belmour, 'I 'ſhould hate him.'

'The only way to preſerve that re'ſpect, Madam,' replied Henrietta, 'is 'not to allow him to encourage any pre'ſumptuous hopes: if you wiſh to keep 'his heart, engage his eſteem; he may 'one time or other, perhaps, be at li'berty to offer you his hand.'

'Ah, Henrietta!' interrupted Miſs Belmour, ſighing, 'that time is very 'diſtant, I fear: but you have put 'ſtrange thoughts into my head; I have 'been to blame to ſuffer Mr. Morley 'to talk to me ſo freely of his paſſion; 'indeed I think he has been leſs reſpect'ful, ſince I ſuffered him to perceive 'that I preferred him to all the men I 'ever ſaw. I own to you freely, that it 'was my apprehenſions of loſing him 'that made me liſten to his arguments; 'for I thought, if I reduced him to de'ſpair, he would conquer his paſſion 'for me: but what if the very means I 'have uſed to keep his heart, ſhould 'prove the cauſe of his ſlighting me! 'Oh! you do not know what anxious, 'uneaſy doubts, you have raiſed in my 'mind! However, I am reſolved to 'behave with more reſerve to him for 'the future. I will try whether his 'paſſion is ſtrong enough to ſubſiſt of 'itſelf; for you have convinced me that 'the hopes with which I have hitherto 'fed it, have been leſs likely to nouriſh 'than to cloy.'

Henrietta would have been better pleaſed if ſentiments more pure had ſuggeſted this deſign; but it was a great point gained to prevail with her on any terms to diſcourage the addreſſes of a man whoſe love was a crime. She flattered herſelf likewiſe that this unexpected ſeverity in Miſs Belmour would produce an alteration in her unworthy lover's behaviour, which might favour her views of exciting her reſentment againſt him; and in this ſhe was not miſtaken.

Mr. Morley thought fit to be offended at the new plan of conduct Miſs Belmour had laid down for herſelf, and complained of it at firſt with that mixture of haughtineſs and ſubmiſſion which a man, who is ſure he is beloved, thinks he has a right to uſe; but, finding this had not the effect he deſired, he had recourſe to a perſonated indifference, in order to alarm her with the fear of loſing him.

Henrietta,

Henrietta, whom she acquainted with every change in his behaviour, told her that this was the time to humble her imperious lover. 'You must either give 'him laws, Madam,' said she, 'or be 'contented to receive them of him: his 'aim was to degrade you to a mistress; 'he will love you, you see, upon no 'other condition.'

'I see it! I see it plainly!' interrupted Miss Belmour, bursting into tears; 'where is now that aweful love he pro-'fessed for me, when a look, a smile, 'was a sufficient reward for all his suf-'ferings!—Dear Henrietta, tell me what 'I shall do to shew him how much I hate 'and despise him.'

'Avoid him, Madam, as much as 'possible,' replied Henrietta. 'When 'you happen to meet him in company, 'suffer him not to speak to you apart, 'and receive no letters from him; per-'sist in this conduct, and you will con-'vince him that you are resolved not to 'purchase the continuance of his affec-'tion by the sacrifice of your honour. 'If he is capable of a sincere and gene-'rous passion, he will esteem and reve-'rence that virtue which opposes his 'desires; and his esteem will strengthen 'his love.'

'Yes,' cried Miss Belmour, 'he 'shall find that he is not so sure of me 'as he has the presumption to imagine. 'I will tell him so myself, and see him 'again, but it shall be only to declare 'that I will never see him more. Give 'me pen and ink, my dear Henrietta: 'I will appoint him a meeting at Lady 'D——'s this evening; and while the 'company is engaged at cards, I shall 'have an opportunity to tell him the re-'solution I have formed, and doubt not 'but I will speak to him in the severest 'terms my resentment can suggest: he 'shall know, to his confusion, that I 'am in earnest.'

'Indeed, Madam,' said Henrietta, 'that is not the way to persuade him 'that you are in earnest; let your actions 'speak for you; shun him carefully, and 'then he must be convinced that you do 'not feign.'

'I have thought of a way to torment 'him,' said Miss Belmour, after a little pause; 'I will go to Paris. Last year 'some ladies of my acquaintance pro-'posed to me to go there with them, and 'I had almost consented; but the wretch, 'who braves me so insolently now, declared then that he could not support 'my absence, and seemed so overwhelm-'ed with grief, that I put off my jour-'ney for that time: but now, were he to 'offer to stab himself at my feet, it should 'not alter my purpose. I will write to 'him this moment, and let him know 'my design.'

'Let me intreat you, Madam,' said Henrietta, 'not to do that; go first, and 'write to him afterwards—And yet I 'could recommend a better way of pu-'nishing this insolent lover.'

'Tell me what better way,' cried Miss Belmour, eagerly.

'It is to marry, Madam,' replied Henrietta. 'Chuse, out of that crowd of 'lovers who address you, him whom 'you think most deserving. Marriage 'will secure your peace, your honour, 'and reputation; and effectually punish 'the man, who made the sacrifice of all 'these the necessary condition of his 'love for you.'

This expedient was not at all approved of by Miss Belmour. She declared she hated the whole sex for Mr. Morley's sake; and Henrietta had no difficulty to believe her: however, she prevailed with her to promise that she would keep her intended journey secret till she was just ready to depart, that it might not seem as if she meant only to alarm her designing lover. This promise she observed so ill, that she declared that very day at Lady D——'s her intention to spend a few months in Paris. Mr. Morley, who was there, and who still kept up his assumed indifference, instead of endeavouring to alter her purpose, as she expected, coldly congratulated her on the pleasures she would enjoy in that enchanting metropolis. Miss Belmour came home ready to burst with rage and disappointment.

'I knew how it would be, Madam,' said Henrietta, 'if you talked of your 'design. Mr. Morley thinks he sees 'through the artifice of it: all you can 'do now is to hasten your departure.'

'I am resolved I'll set out to-morrow 'morning,' said Miss Belmour. 'No 'matter for preparations; pack up a few 'necessaries to take with us in the coach, 'and leave directions for my trunks to 'be sent after. When we come to Dover, 'if there is not a packet-boat ready to 'sail, I'll hire one at any price: I shall 'not be at rest till I have convinced this 'man I am really determined to avoid 'him.'

Henrietta kept up this ſpirit; and after ſhe had given proper directions to the houſekeeper, and ſent orders for the coach to be ready early in the morning, ſhe buſied herſelf in packing up, her lady aſſiſting, in a violent flutter of ſpirits, and wiſhing impatiently for the hour of departure.

Our fair heroine had ſome objections to taking this journey herſelf, but her concern for Miſs Belmour over-ruled them all. She was not willing to leave unfiniſhed the good work ſhe had begun; and ſhe was apprehenſive that, if the young lady was left to the guidance of her own paſſions, this ſudden ſally of reſentment would end in a reconciliation fatal to her virtue.

She would have been glad to ſee the counteſs before ſhe went, but there was no time for this viſit; therefore ſhe contented herſelf with writing to that lady, and to her friend Mrs. Willis. The counteſs received the news of this journey with great pleaſure, becauſe ſhe hoped that abſence would effectually cure her ſon's paſſion for Henrietta, the conſequences of which ſhe was ſtill apprehenſive of, notwithſtanding he had ſhewn an extraordinary prudence in the conduct of it.

But Mrs. Willis was very uneaſy, leſt any thing ſhould happen that might make her repent the removing herſelf thus from all her friends, and putting herſelf entirely in the power of a ſtranger. Had there been time for it, ſhe would have endeavoured to diſſuade Henrietta from going; but, recollecting that Mr. Damer was in France, and that they might poſſibly meet, ſhe reſolved to write to the old gentleman, and give him a full account of every thing relating to the ſituation of his fair perſecuted ward, not even omitting his ſon's doubtful behaviour with regard to her; for ſhe knew that, if they met, Henrietta would be ſilent upon that article; and yet it was neceſſary he ſhould know it, that he might be convinced her misfortunes were chiefly owing to his ſon's treachery; and this conſideration, ſhe hoped, would produce ſomething to her advantage.

HENRIETTA.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

CHAP. I.

CONTAINS AN ADVENTURE, IN WHICH OUR HEROINE IS MORE THAN ORDINARILY INTERESTED.

IN the mean time, our fair travellers, having regulated their affairs in the beſt manner the extreme hurry they were in would admit, ſet out for Dover in Miſs Belmour's coach. That young lady, ſtill agitated with the violence of her reſentment, which Henrietta took care ſhould not abate, and elated with the hope of reducing her lover to deſpair, by thus leaving him, thought the horſes went too ſlow for her impatience. She wiſhed for wings to convey her at once far from him, and declared that ſhe never deſired to ſee him more; yet Henrietta obſerved that ſhe frequently looked out of the windows with an air of anxious expectation, and would ſigh when ſhe drew in her head again, as if ſhe had been diſappointed. Doubtleſs, ſhe had conceived hopes that her lover would follow her; and, conſidering this neglect as a new proof of his indifference, it redoubled her rage, and ſtrengthened a reſolution in which reaſon and virtue had very little ſhare.

This thought gave Henrietta extreme concern: her converſion promiſed no great permaneney, ſince it was founded on ſuch motives; but all ſhe could now do was to manage her paſſions, for the time was not yet come to touch her heart by ſentiments of piety and virtue.

On their arrival at Dover, they found the Calais packet-boat ready to ſail. Miſs Belmour, who would fain have lingered at Dover a day, was not much pleaſed with this circumſtance, but her pride was concerned not to betray any irreſolution: accordingly ſhe embarked with a tolerable good grace; and the wind continuing fair, they ſoon landed at Calais.

Miſs Belmour having made the journey before, was under no embarraſſment how to conduct herſelf. She proceeded to the inn ſhe had formerly been at; and having hired a poſt-chaiſe for herſelf and Henrietta, and a horſe for her ſervant, ſhe ſet out immediately after dinner, and reached Boulogne that evening.

As the chaiſe ſtopped at the inn they put up at, two gentlemen alighted at the ſame time; one of whom hearing they were Engliſh ladies, advanced, and reſpectfully offered them his hand to help them out. Miſs Belmour, pleaſed with the graceful appearance of this ſtranger, politely accepted his aſſiſtance, which he likewiſe tendered to Henrietta, whoſe charms, at the firſt glance, made a powerful impreſſion on his heart.

His eyes told her this ſo intelligibly, that ſhe was under ſome confuſion; yet ſhe found in herſelf a kind of ſatisfaction at the attention with which he gazed on her, and was now for the firſt time ſenſible to the pleaſure of charming: but, accuſtomed to watch carefully over the motions of her own mind, ſhe checked this riſing vanity; and, a little aſhamed of the folly ſhe diſcovered in herſelf, ſhe haſtily withdrew her hand, which he ſtill held, as not being maſter enough of himſelf

ſelf to part with it, though ſhe was already out of the chaiſe; and thanking him by a graceful curtſey for his civility, ſhe followed Miſs Belmour into the room the landlady had conducted her to.

The young gentleman ſtood gazing after her as long as ſhe was in ſight; then turning to his friend, who was giving ſome orders to their footmen—

'Oh, Charles!' cried he, with a look half ſerious, half gay, 'my fatal hour 'is come!'

'What! I'll warrant you,' ſaid the other, 'you are ſhot through the heart 'with the glances of the younger of thoſe 'ladies; I obſerved how you gazed on 'her.'

'Is ſhe not a charming creature?' exclaimed the firſt; 'what features! what 'a complexion! what elegance in her 'whole form! I am ſure ſhe has wit; 'I ſaw her ſoul in her eyes.'

'Faith! I am half concerned for you,' interrupted Charles, with an affected ſeriouſneſs: 'this will be an unfortunate 'encounter, I am afraid.'

'Can we not think of ſome method 'to introduce ourſelves to them?' cried the other, without minding what he had ſaid: 'I ſhall not reſt till I find out who 'they are.'

'What will it ſignify to you to know?' replied Charles: 'they are going to Paris, 'and we to London.'

'Why, aye, that is true,' ſaid the other, 'we ſhall go different ways in 'the morning; and yet—what think 'you, my dear Charles, of going back 'to Paris for a few days, and we ſhall 'have an opportunity of eſcorting theſe 'fair travellers?—Come, it will be but 'a frolick, and I know you are no ene-'my to them.'

'I don't like this frolick,' replied Charles; 'it has too ſerious an air: ſure 'you are ſtrangely charmed with this 'girl—juſt upon the point of ſeeing 'your father and your family, after a 'long abſence, and ſo ſuddenly to re-'ſolve upon protracting your ſtay from 'them—I don't half like it, I confeſs; 'and this once, my lord, I muſt oppoſe 'your inclinations.'

'Oh, Sir, you are grave!' replied his lordſhip, a little ſullenly; 'you have a 'mind to exert the governor too; but 'let me tell you, that, conſidering the 'equality of our years, and the terms 'we have hitherto lived upon, this wiſ-'dom is very unſeaſonable.'

The young lord, having ſaid this with ſome emotion, haſtily entered the houſe; and calling to the inn-keeper to ſhew him a room, went away, without taking any farther notice of his governor, who ſtood muſing for ſome time after he was gone, and then followed him, with an intention to bring him, if poſſible, to reaſon.

Upon his entering the room, he found his pupil leaning on a table, with a diſcontented air. He juſt raiſed his head, to ſee who it was that came in; and immediately reſumed his former poſture, without ſpeaking a word.

The governor looked at him a moment in ſilence; at laſt—

'This penſiveneſs,' ſaid he, 'and this 'cauſeleſs reſentment, are they not ſtrong 'arguments againſt my complying with 'your propoſal? The impreſſion this 'girl has made on your heart muſt needs 'be very great, ſince it can make you 'already forget that friendſhip you have 'vowed for me, and in which I placed 'ſo much happineſs.'

'It is you, not I, who ſeem to have 'forgot our mutual friendſhip,' replied the young nobleman, melted at theſe laſt words: 'Why did you, my dear Charles, 'loſe the beloved friend and companion 'in the auſtere governor? is not this 'ſtrange affectation!'

'Indeed, my lord,' replied the governor, 'I ſhould be unworthy the title of 'your friend, if I was not attentive to 'your intereſt.'

'Was there ever any thing ſo abſurd,' interrupted his lordſhip, 'to 'make a ſerious affair of a little idle 'curioſity!'

'Don't you make a ſerious affair of 'it,' replied the governor, 'and I ſhall 'be contented.'

'Well, then, you conſent to go back 'to Paris with me,' ſaid the pupil.

'If you are reſolved to go,' anſwered the governor, 'to be ſure I will go with 'you.'

'Now you are my friend again,' ſaid the young lord, hugging him: 'I pro-'miſe you, I will not ſtay long in Paris; 'but, we muſt be Freeman and Melvil 'once more, my dear Charles.—Ah, 'how many pleaſant adventures have 'we had under thoſe names!'

'If this proves of no greater conſe-'quence,' reſumed the young governor, 'I ſhall not regret coming into your 'ſcheme; but I confeſs I am alarmed

'at

Plate II.

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'at your eagerneſs to follow this young 'woman. She ſeems to have made no 'ſlight impreſſion on your heart: there 'is danger in theſe ſort of attachments; 'how do you know how far this may 'lead you?'

'What ſtrange notions have entered 'your head!' ſaid the young nobleman; 'it is hardly worth while to make a ſeri- 'ous anſwer to them: but this you may 'depend upon, that I never will follow 'my inclinations in oppoſition to the 'duty I owe my father. And now, 'what do you think will become of this 'dangerous attachment? But,' added he, ſmiling, 'we muſt make our fellow- 'travellers a viſit; theſe inns are charm- 'ing places for ſhortening the ceremonies 'of a firſt introduction.' He rang the bell, without waiting for his friend's anſwer; and, one of his ſervants appearing, he ordered him to preſent Mr. Freeman's and his compliments to the two Engliſh ladies, with a requeſt that they would permit them to wait upon them.

Henrietta felt her heart flutter at this meſſage; yet her natural reſerve made her wiſh Miſs Belmour would decline the viſit of theſe young gentlemen. However, that lady returned a civil anſwer, and permiſſion for them to come.

Henrietta, ſenſible of an agitation which ſhe had never known before, would have choſen not to have ſhared this viſit; but it was not poſſible to avoid it. Miſs Belmour had obliged her to throw off the character of a ſervant, and to live with her upon the footing of a friend and companion; to which Henrietta was induced to conſent, by the hope ſhe had, that this familiarity would furniſh her with opportunities to guard her unhappy miſtreſs againſt the evils into which her blind paſſion was hurrying her.

To this mark of conſideration and eſteem Miſs Belmour added a moſt affectionate behaviour, which entirely won the heart of the tender and grateful Henrietta: for nothing ſo much reſembles true friendſhip, as thoſe connections which lovers form with perſons whom they make the confidents of their paſſion.

Thus circumſtanced, Henrietta was obliged to receive the compliments of Mr. Melvil and his friend, as well as her lady; who, ſoon after, fell into a fit of muſing, that made it neceſſary for our fair heroine to keep up the converſation with the two gentlemen, which ſhe did with that ſprightlineſs and vivacity ſo natural to her.

The graces of her wit, the eaſy elegance of her manners, and the modeſt dignity of her deportment, formed new chains for the heart of Melvil. He looked on his friend with an exulting air: his eyes challenged his admiration of the woman, whoſe merit juſtified the ſentiments he entertained for her.

At parting, he told the ladies, that, ſince he was going to Paris, as well as they, he hoped they would allow him the pleaſure of eſcorting them; and that he would regulate his journey entirely by theirs.

Henrietta, who well remembered to have ſeen theſe travellers taking the very contrary route, was a little ſurpriſed at this declaration; but Miſs Belmour, abſorbed in her own reflections, was wholly ignorant of that circumſtance; and, conſidering this offer in no other light than that of general politeneſs, ſhe received it with her uſual complaiſance.

The youth and beauty of the two ladies made their apparent independent ſituation a matter of curioſity to Mr. Freeman, as well as the profound melancholy in which one of them ſeemed buried.

Melvil was little concerned in theſe enquiries: all his thoughts were taken up with the perfections he found in her who had charmed him; and he was much leſs ſolicitous to diſcover who ſhe was, than how to make himſelf agreeable to her. He found ſhe was not married, by the other lady's giving her the title of Miſs when ſhe ſpoke to her; and he was perfectly ſatisfied with this knowledge. Conſcious of the ardour with which he already loved this fair ſtranger, he was apprehenſive of awakening the fears of his friend, by dwelling too long on her praiſes; but he received the teſtimony, which Freeman could not help giving to her merit, with ſuch an undiſguiſed tranſport, as drew from him ſome ſerious admonitions, which he rallied off with a ſprightly air, and then changed the diſcourſe to a leſs intereſting ſubject.

CHAP. II.

WHICH SHEWS THAT IT IS EASIER TO BE WISE FOR OTHERS THAN OURSELVES.

THOUGH Miss Belmour's melancholy had hindered her from taking any great share in the conversation during this visit, yet her mind was still free enough to observe, that Henrietta had made an impression upon the heart of Mr. Melvil. She congratulated her, smiling, upon her conquest; nor did her raillery even spare her: for Henrietta, who, for a full hour, had appeared animated with an extraordinary vivacity, became all on a sudden pensive and silent. This change exactly commenced at the time Mr. Melvil went away; but she did not perceive it herself, and started, as from a dream, when Miss Belmour reproached her with it.

Concerned that she had given room for a suspicion of this nature, she began, as soon as she was alone, to examine her own heart. 'Miss Belmour had praised 'the personal graces of Mr. Melvil, and 'it was but justice to own, that he was 'eminently handsome; but was she weak 'enough to be dazzled with the beauty of 'a man? No, certainly: his countenance 'pleased her, because it was a picture of 'his mind; candour, sweetness, bene-'volence, shined in every feature: the 'politeness of his address, his gentle 'manners, that air so noble, yet so pe-'culiarly soft and engaging, his good 'sense, and, above all, the justness and 'purity of his sentiments, which she had 'time enough to discover during their 'conversation; were not these qualities 'which a modest young woman might 'esteem? and is love a necessary con-'sequence of esteeming one of that sex? 'Must she deny herself the pleasure of 'approving virtue and merit, for fear 'of loving it too much?' It was thus she argued, and soon dispelled those doubts which Miss Belmour's raillery had raised in her mind.

While Henrietta, under the notion of barely esteeming what was indeed truly worthy of esteem, was insensibly giving way to more tender sentiments, Mr. Melvil, who loved with all the tenderness and ardour of a first passion, as his really was, burned with impatience for the hour when they were to join the fair travellers. Freeman directed his attention to Miss Belmour, which gave the young lover an opportunity of employing his whole care and assiduity about his mistress, who ascribed all to his natural politeness, and remained in a perfect tranquillity, as well with regard to his sentiments as her own. Miss Belmour's experience, however, soon let her into the secret of their hearts. Melvil's passion was indeed apparent enough, notwithstanding the pains he was at to conceal it, through fear of his friend's troublesome remonstrances; but Henrietta's, though hid from herself, was open to Miss Belmour's discerning eyes, and she exulted in the discovery.

This rigid censurer of her conduct, this inflexibly virtuous maid, was entangled in the snares of love. She perceived that she herself was ignorant of her own danger, and she was resolved not to draw her out of this false security by any unseasonable railleries: for, however useful the strict principles of Henrietta had been to her, yet she could not bear the superiority they gave her; and she rejoiced in the hope, that a passion, perhaps as unfortunately placed as her own, would reduce her to an equality with her.

Their journey now drew near a period: Melvil trembled at the thoughts of parting; he had indeed laid the foundation of an intimacy with the two ladies, which would give him a right to visit them in Paris; but he had been used to see the object of his passion continually, from the first moment of his acquaintance with her: and although they never separated till the evening, yet he thought the time amazingly long till they met again. How then would he be able to support an absence of two or three days, which decorum would oblige him to make the interval of his visits? besides, she was still ignorant of the sentiments she had inspired him with. Hitherto he had never found an opportunity of speaking to her alone; but, if one should offer, how could he declare himself to a woman, for whom he felt as much respect as love? yet one, whose birth he was ignorant of, who seemed to be in a dependent situation, whom he could not think of marrying, and whom he durst not wish to seduce.

The difficulties he could not remove he endeavoured to banish from his thoughts; and, without considering what

must

must be the event of the passion he was thus indulging, he for the present confined all his wishes to the pleasure of seeing her.

Miss Belmour had often wondered that this young lover shewed so little solicitude to make opportunities of speaking to his mistress in private. She could not impute this behaviour to want of ardour; every look he gave her was expressive of the tenderness his soul was filled with: it was then respect, it was awe, it was fear of offending, that laid him under this restraint. How glorious this for Henrietta! how humiliating for her, who had scarce escaped falling a sacrifice to the dishonourable attempts of her lover! Was she then less capable of inspiring a respectful passion than her woman? or did her charms act more powerfully on the heart she had subdued, than those of Henrietta? This question her self-love easily decided; and, from the same sentiment, she was persuaded that Henrietta, with all her boasted virtue, would defend herself as weakly against the lover her inclinations declared for, as she had done. Her present triumph, she thought, was less owing to her own strength than her lover's weakness, who had not yet made a formal attack upon her heart: curiosity to know what effect the declaration of his passion would have, made her resolve to give him an opportunity of speaking to her in private. They were now within a day's journey of Paris. On their arrival at the house where they were to dine, Mr. Freeman, as usual, went to give orders for their entertainment, and left Melvil with the two ladies. Miss Belmour, pretending that she had a mind for some particular dish, ran after him, and kept him in conversation, that he might not interrupt the lovers, who being now for the first time alone together, were both equally embarrassed.

Henrietta cast down her eyes, surprized at the confusion in which she found herself, and shocked at the intelligence this new emotion gave her of the true state of her heart. Mr. Melvil approached her trembling; he could not resolve to lose so favourable an opportunity of declaring his sentiments to her: but the natural goodness and rectitude of his mind suggesting to him, that it was a kind of fraud to seek encouragement of a passion, the design of which he was not himself able to answer for, he remained a few moments in suspence.

This silence increased Henrietta's embarrassment; but suddenly reflecting upon the advantage it gave Mr. Melvil over her, she turned her eyes towards him, with a look, in which she endeavoured to throw as much indifference as possible, but which, nevertheless, had an unusual coldness in it; so that Melvil, partly witheld by his extreme delicacy, and partly by the awe which this severe glance inspired him with, dropped, for that time, all thoughts of declaring his passion, and immediately entered into an indifferent conversation.

Henrietta seemed as if relieved from a painful load; her countenance resumed it's former sweetness, and she talked to him with her usual vivacity: yet Miss Belmour, at her return, saw some remains of her late uneasiness in her eyes; she observed, too, that she spoke less to Mr. Melvil, and more to his friend, than she did before; that she studiously avoided the looks of the former; and that her behaviour to him was less free and obliging than it used to be. All this she looked upon as the play of coquetry; and in Mr. Melvil's apparent melancholy she saw it's purpose and effect.

But Henrietta, taught by what passed in her own heart during the few moments she was alone with Mr. Melvil, that she not only considered him as a lover, but a lover formidable by his engaging qualities, resolved not to strengthen her prepossession in his favour, by continuing to see and converse with him. Lord B——'s behaviour had given her no high idea of the disinterestedness of men. She trembled at her own imprudence, in so far forgetting the humble station that Providence had placed her in, as to entertain sentiments of tenderness for a man, who, from the inequality there was between them, might think himself authorised to form expectations injurious to her honour: though her weakness was so lately known to herself, yet she fancied it had been perceived by others before, and that even Mr. Melvil had discovered the preference with which she regarded him. It was this thought which made her so suddenly alter her behaviour; but as indifference is, of all dispositions of the mind, the hardest to feign, Melvil imputed the apparent constraint in her manner to some disgust he

had unhappily given her, and Miss Belmour to the artifice of a coquet.

Henrietta, who was far from imagining she over-acted her part, continued, during the whole time they were at dinner, to avoid her lover's looks, so carefully, that he had no opportunity to make her comprehend by them, how much he was concerned at her extraordinary coldness. However, she could not, without affectation, refuse him her hand when they left the inn; but they followed Mr. Freeman and Miss Belmour so close, that it was not possible for him to speak to her without being overheard; and he in vain sought her eyes: they were always directed another way. He sighed when he helped her into the chaise; and if she had not turned her face from him that moment, the blush with which it was overspread, would have shewn him that she took but too much notice of that sigh.

'You are melancholy, Henrietta,' said Miss Belmour, after looking at her in silence for a long time, attentive to the motions of her mind, which might be easily read in her countenance.

'Am I, Madam?' replied she, with a sigh half suppressed, and a gentle smile.

'Yes, indeed, are you,' resumed Miss Belmour, mimicking the languid accent in which she spoke; 'and I don't remember that I ever saw you so before.'

'And yet I have many causes for melancholy, Madam,' replied Henrietta, whose heart was full, and she eagerly grasped at this opportunity to relieve herself by tears; tears, which she supposed she gave to the remembrance of her misfortunes, without asking herself, why that remembrance was more poignant now than before.

'Ah! Henrietta,' said Miss Belmour, shaking her head, 'your heart has undergone a great change within these few days. You are in love, my dear.'—'Is it possible, Madam,' cried Henrietta, hastily, her fair face all crimsoned over, 'that you have discovered?—— Do you think that—— Then, to be sure, Mr. Melvil——' She stopped abruptly, and cast down her eyes: the mention of that name seemed to lead her to a consciousness, that she had betrayed herself.

Miss Belmour was affected with her beautiful simplicity. 'Don't be ashamed, my dear Henrietta,' said she, taking her hand, 'to speak freely to me. From me,' added she, sighing, 'you may be sure of indulgence.'

'No, Madam, no,' interrupted Henrietta, with great earnestness, 'I would not seek indulgence for my weaknesses: but I conjure you, Madam,' pursued she, with tears that, in spite of her endeavours, would force their way, 'suffer me to return to that humble station, from which your partial kindness raised me. You have made me forget I was a servant. It does not become me to view with sensibility the merit of persons so greatly above me. But you shall find, Madam, that I will repair this error, and that my conduct shall be such as may render me not unworthy your esteem.'

Notwithstanding the delicate turn which Henrietta gave to a declaration, which shewed she was determined early to conquer her passion, yet Miss Belmour considered it as a triumph over her, who had not been capable of acting with equal prudence.

'It is happy for you,' said she, coldly, 'that you need no assistance to help you to keep your passions in subjection; but I owe you too many obligations for the good counsel you have given me, to permit you to appear in any other character than that of my friend.'

Henrietta's mind was in so much agitation, that she did not take in the full sense of this answer; but, struck with the obliging purport of the last words of it, she expressed her gratitude in terms full of tenderness and respect.

The sight of Paris drew them both out of a long silence, which had succeeded a conversation with which neither had been pleased: Henrietta, because it had discovered so much weakness on her side; Miss Belmour, because it had shewn so little.

Their chaise, as Miss Belmour had directed, stopped at the house of her banker in Paris. The two gentlemen were already at the side it. Mr. Melvil, as if he was afraid Henrietta would refuse him her hand, seized it with trembling haste; and, as he led her into the house, ventured to press it with his lips, unperceived by any one else. Henrietta, imputing this boldness to the discovery he had made of her sentiments, pulled her hand away hastily, giving him a look at the same time that expressed her resentment; but all her anger could not prevent

prevent her from being affected with the soft languor that appeared in his face, and the submissive manner in which he had yielded to the effort she made to withdraw her hand.

Miss Belmour, at parting, told them, she hoped to see them again in a day or two, when she should be settled. Her Parisian friend soon procured her convenient lodgings; and, at her desire, recommended to her a Femme de Chambre, among the other servants he provided her; which Henrietta in vain opposed; but, fixed in her design to avoid Mr. Melvil, she took care to be seldom in the way when he came.

Miss Belmour blamed her for this conduct. 'You will make the man 'think you love him, and are afraid of 'him,' said she, 'by flying him.'

'If I loved him, Madam,' replied Henrietta, blushing, 'is it not prudence 'to avoid him?'

'Why, I don't know,' said Miss Belmour; 'Mr. Melvil certainly loves 'you; and, whatever inequality there 'may be in your conditions, yet love is 'a great leveller: he may possibly intend 'to marry you.'

'It is not fit I should suppose he has 'any such design, Madam,' resumed Henrietta, 'since it is highly improbable; and I will not expose myself 'to the danger of being deceived. I 'have somewhere read,' added she, smiling, 'that in love flight is victory; 'and this way at least I shall be sure to 'conquer.'

Miss Belmour, who knew how difficult it was to be in love and be wise, laughed at a resolution, which she did not think it would be always in her power to maintain. Poor Henrietta, who had so artlessly laid open her heart, was often exposed to the most poignant raillery from her; but at length she was delivered from this kind of persecution by a surprising alteration in Miss Belmour herself.

This young lady, who had fled from her lover, rather with a hope of stimulating his passion than of subduing her own, though she endeavoured to impose upon herself in believing the latter to be the true motive of her conduct, fell into a most violent despair, when she found that, far from following her, he did not even seek a reconciliation by writing to her. Sick of herself, the world, and tired of her existence, she mistook the agitations of a heart tortured by jealousy, disappointment, and the pangs of slighted love, for the motions of grace, and the genuine marks of repentance. She neglected her dress, took no pleasure in any amusement, avoided company, and spent whole hours in her closet, where she wept and prayed by turns.

She told Henrietta, that the world and all it's pleasures were grown insipid to her; that her whole soul was filled with divine love; and that the thoughts and exercises of religion made up all her happiness. She then passionately regretted that there were no religious communities among the Protestants, where a mind that was weaned from this sublunary world, and all it's vanities, might freely indulge it's pious contemplations, and devote itself entirely to Heaven. 'Oh, 'how happy are the nuns!' she exclaimed; 'how I envy them! Sure no-'thing can be more delightful, when 'persons are truly pious, than to live 'in a religious society excluded from all 'commerce with a world they must 'certainly despise. I think I should 'be perfectly contented if I was in a 'cloister.'

Henrietta congratulated her upon her new sentiments, but endeavoured to prove that there was more merit in passing through life with innocence, and in rightly performing all it's duties, than in flying to the gloomy solitude of a cloister, where virtue is secured by bolts and bars, and the exercises of religion performed as a penance. She recommended to her the study of the Scriptures, and put some practical treatises of religion, written by the best authors, into her hands: but the zeal of this new convert was so flaming, that nothing would serve her but a total retirement from the world; and she made such frequent visits to a convent, where a friend of hers had lately taken the veil, that Henrietta was apprehensive the nuns would discover the true state of her mind, and take advantage of her passions to pervert her principles, and secure her to themselves.

While these whims possessed her, she was so inaccessible to all visiters, that Mr. Melvil could with difficulty get admittance. Freeman saw the progress of his passion with great uneasiness; and, finding that he could not be prevailed upon to leave Paris, resolved to write to his father, and give him a hint of the dangerous

gerous attachment his son had formed, that he might send him a peremptory command to return to England: but, before he could execute this design, Melvil, to his great surprize, told him, that he would leave Paris in two days. The poor youth expected his friend would have expressed some joy at this news; and being disappointed at his receiving with indifference what had cost him so many pangs to resolve upon—

'You make me no compliments,' said he, with a tender smile, 'upon the 'conquest I have gained over my incli-'nations: do you think I can banish 'myself from Miss Benson without con-'cern?'

'I am sure I cannot hear you speak 'in this manner without concern,' replied Freeman. 'Is it fit for a young 'man of your rank to entertain a seri-'ous liking for a woman, to whose 'birth and character you are an absolute 'stranger?'

'There is not a man in the world,' resumed Melvil, eagerly, 'who need to 'blush for loving Miss Benson: her per-'son, beautiful as it is, is the least of 'her charms; that mingled sweetness 'and dignity in her manners, that grace-'ful modesty which distinguishes every 'word and action of hers, exalts her 'above all the women I have ever seen. 'You have heard her talk, and you could 'not help owning that you thought her 'very sensible.'

'Well, but what is all this to the 'purpose?' interrupted Freeman; 'what 'signifies attributing such goddess-like 'perfections to an obscure girl, whom, 'if you were at liberty to dispose of 'yourself, you would not, I suppose, 'be so mad as to marry? Your fortune 'enables you to make other proposals, 'less unworthy of yourself, though ad-'vantageous enough for a young wo-'man in her dependent situation. Own 'freely then, that this is your intention.'

'May I perish,' replied Melvil, with some emotion, 'if I would degrade such 'excellence to a mistress; but, if I were 'capable of such a design, her virtue, 'I am sure, is incorruptible. Have you 'not observed with what care she shuns 'me? She knows I love her; but she 'knows not with what purity I love her; 'and, conscious of her situation, she is 'afraid I should take advantage of it to 'declare myself in a manner that would 'wound her delicacy.—Charming crea-'ture! I love her! I adore her!—In-'deed, my dear Freeman, it is time to 'be gone.'

'I see it plainly,' replied Freeman; 'you are grown quite romantick. We 'will set out to-morrow, if you please; 'for, with the strange notions you have 'entertained, I think you ought not 'to trust yourself here any longer.'

The lover consented with a sigh; but, at the same time, put his friend in mind, that civility obliged them to go and take leave of the ladies. Freeman could not reasonably oppose his making this visit; and, after he had given proper directions to the servants for their journey the next day, he accompanied him to Miss Belmour's lodgings.

CHAP. III.

IN WHICH MISS BELMOUR ACTS THE PART OF A TRUE FEMALE FRIEND.

THEY found the two ladies together. Henrietta could not, without affectation, avoid her lover that day, as she was in the room when he came in; and he, who had not been so fortunate for several days before, found so much delight in looking at her and hearing her speak, that he forgot he came to pay a farewel visit; which Mr. Freeman observing, took care to mention their design of leaving Paris the next day.

Melvil's gaiety was immediately overcast, Henrietta turned pale, Freeman was attentive to his friend's emotions, and only Miss Belmour had freedom of mind enough left to speak. She said some civil things upon the occasion, which Freeman answered; for Melvil continued silent, with his eyes fixed upon Henrietta, who had bent hers towards the ground: conscious of the emotion with which she had heard the news of their intended departure, she durst not look up, lest the person, from whom she was most solicitous to hide her concern, should read it too plainly in her countenance.

Recovering herself at length, upon Miss Belmour's taking occasion to thank them anew for the civilities she had received from them during their journey from Calais, she added a few words to her compliment; but, in doing so, her eyes slightly glanced over Mr. Melvil,

and

and directed their looks full upon his friend.

The converſation was dull enough during two hours that they ſtayed; and Freeman, perceiving the young gentleman wanted reſolution to put an end to the viſit, roſe up firſt: Mr. Melvil roſe likewiſe, though with apparent reluctance; and having ſaluted Miſs Belmour, approached Henrietta, trembling. She turned pale and red ſucceſſively; a ſoft ſigh ſtole from her. Melvil was in too much emotion to obſerve hers: he ſaluted her with an air of ſolemn reſpect; but, as ſhe retired a ſtep back, a ſudden impulſe, which he could not reſiſt, made him take her hand; he preſſed it to his lips with paſſionate tenderneſs, and, ſighing, quitted the room with the utmoſt precipitation.

Henrietta's eyes overflowed; ſhe made haſte to wipe them before Miſs Belmour, who attended the gentlemen as far as the door of her anti-chamber, returned.

'Ah! my poor Henrietta,' ſaid that young lady, who perceived ſhe had been weeping, 'I pity you! What ſordid 'wretches are theſe men! Melvil loves 'you, and yet he is able to leave you; 'nay, I am perſuaded he has diſcovered 'your tenderneſs for him. What mon'ſtrous ingratitude! You ought to hate 'him, my dear.'

'You bid me hate him, Madam,' replied Henrietta, ſmiling, 'yet ſay every 'thing that can confirm me in a fa'vourable opinion of him. If he loves 'me, and has ſeen any weakneſs in me, 'he gives the beſt proof of his love in 'not ſeeking to take advantage of that 'weakneſs.'

Miſs Belmour, who thought this a ſtrange way of reaſoning, anſwered no otherwiſe than by a ſignificant ſmile, which ſeemed to ſay, ſhe was reſolved to juſtify him at any rate; while Henrietta, finding in her lover's behaviour a delicacy which agreeably flattered her eſteem of him, cheriſhed his remembrance with a tender grief, and, perhaps, for the firſt time, repined at her unhappy fortune, which had placed ſuch a diſtance between them

As ſoon as the two gentlemen had left the ladies lodgings, Melvil, who found himſelf very low ſpirited, propoſed to his friend to ſpend the evening at a noted Hotel, with ſome young Engliſhmen of faſhion, who were newly arrived. Freeman conſented; but obſerved with uneaſineſs, that his pupil, who till then had been remarkably abſtemious, puſhed about the bottle with great velocity, and could not be perſuaded to go home till the night was far advanced.

Mr. Freeman ſaw him in bed, and then retired to his own chamber, full of apprehenſions leſt this ſudden intemperance ſhould have any bad effect on his health. As ſoon as it was light, he went to his bed-ſide, and found him with all the ſymptoms of a feveriſh diſorder upon him, to which the agitations of his mind had contributed more, perhaps, than the liquor of which he had drank ſo freely.

All thoughts of their journey were now laid aſide; phyſicians were ſent for, who pronounced that he was dangerouſly ill: Freeman, full of anxiety, ſat cloſe to his bed, holding one of his burning hands tenderly preſſed between his. He heard him ſigh frequently; and from thence took occaſion to aſk him, if any ſecret uneaſineſs occaſioned his indiſpoſition?

The young gentleman attributed his illneſs entirely to the exceſs he had been guilty of the night before; but his fever increaſing, he grew delirious, and then the name of Miſs Benſon was continually in his mouth.

Freeman, judging by theſe ravings of the deep impreſſion this young woman had made on the heart of his pupil, blamed himſelf for ſo obſtinately oppoſing his paſſion; and, judging from Henrietta's ſituation that ſhe would not refuſe to liſten to ſuch propoſals as his fortune enabled him to make her, he reſolved to attempt ſomething in his friend's favour.

His curioſity having led him to make ſome enquiries concerning Miſs Belmour of ſeveral perſons that had lately arrived from England, he found ſhe had but a doubtful character; her connections with Mr. Morley having expoſed her to great cenſure. Of her companion he could learn nothing; but, concluding from the friendſhip there appeared to be between them, that ſhe was her confident in this amour, he flattered himſelf that ſhe would not be a very difficult conqueſt.

He ſhut his eyes upon all that was wrong in this proceeding; and, conſidering nothing but the intereſt of his friend, for whom he had the moſt paſſionate concern, he thought it leſs dangerous to give him a miſtreſs, than to truſt him to the fantaſtick power of his paſſion, which might

might hurry him on to a clandeſtine marriage.

The young gentleman was in a few days entirely out of danger from the fever; but his ſighs, and the penſive air of his countenance, ſhewed that his mind was not at eaſe.

'If you were able to go abroad,' ſaid Freeman to him, 'we would viſit our 'Engliſh ladies once more before we 'leave Paris. They imagine we are in 'London by this time, and will be 'ſtrangely ſurprized to ſee us again.'

'Then they do not know I have been 'ill,' replied Mr. Melvil.

'Not yet,' ſaid Freeman; 'but if you 'wiſh they ſhould know, I will wait on 'them this afternoon, and tell them 'what has kept us in Paris ſo much lon-'ger than we intended.'

Melvil affected to receive this propoſal with indifference; but his friend obſerved that he was more chearful than before, and doubted not but he expected the news of his illneſs would have ſome effect on Henrietta.

He went at the uſual hour, and was immediately admitted. 'You are in Paris 'ſtill, then?' exclaimed Miſs Belmour, in a joyful accent, as ſoon as Freeman entered her apartment. 'I am exceſſively 'glad of it; I hope your agreeable friend 'is with you.'

Freeman, a little diſappointed at not ſeeing Henrietta with her, anſwered coldly, that Mr. Melvil had been indiſpoſed, which obliged them to delay their journey.

'I fancy,' ſaid Miſs Belmour, with an arch leer, 'that the air of Paris is 'mighty neceſſary for your friend at this 'time; you are in the wrong to hurry 'him away.'

'You have a great deal of penetra-'tion, Madam,' replied Mr. Freeman, ſmiling; 'you have gueſſed the cauſe of 'his illneſs, I believe.'

'I believe I have,' reſumed Miſs Belmour; 'and perhaps I could tell him 'ſomething that might contribute to for-'ward his recovery.'

Freeman began now to think his ſcheme was in a hopeful way. 'To be 'ſincere with you, Madam,' ſaid he, with a graver look and accent, 'Mr. 'Melvil is deſperately in love with Miſs 'Benſon.'

'Poor man!' cried Miſs Belmour, laughing, 'he is to be pitied truly, for 'Miſs Benſon is moſt deſperately in love 'with him likewiſe.'

'How happy would this news make 'him!' exclaimed Freeman. 'Am I, 'Madam, at liberty to tell him?'

'Certainly,' replied Miſs Belmour; 'I told you for that purpoſe; and now 'what do you think of my frankneſs?'

'I adore you for it, Madam,' ſaid Freeman, taking her hand, which (encouraged by her behaviour) he kiſſed with great liberty. 'Ah!' purſued he, looking at her tenderly, 'what addi-'tional charms does kindneſs give to 'beauty!'

'I hear Miſs Benſon on the ſtairs,' ſaid Miſs Belmour, withdrawing her hand; 'I will give you an opportunity 'to plead your friend's cauſe: remember 'what I have told you, and don't be 'diſcouraged by a little affectation.'

She ſtopped upon Henrietta's entrance, who ſtarted at the ſight of Mr. Freeman, and immediately after her fair face was covered with bluſhes.

'You ſee we have not loſt our good 'friends yet,' ſaid Miſs Belmour. Henrietta only ſmiled. 'I muſt deſire you, 'my dear,' purſued that young lady, 'to entertain Mr. Freeman; I ordered 'ſome trades-people to attend me about 'this time.'

She hurried out of the room when ſhe had ſaid this, not without ſome confuſion for the part ſhe had acted; to account for which, it is neceſſary the reader ſhould know that the mind of this young lady had undergone another revolution, within the few days of Mr. Melvil's illneſs.

A letter from her lover, filled with tender complaints, and new aſſurances of everlaſting fidelity, had baniſhed all thoughts of devotion and a convent. She had anſwered it immediately, without communicating it to Henrietta; her tranſport at finding herſelf ſtill beloved, and the fear of diſguſting him by any new coldneſs, hurried her on to the moſt fatal reſolutions. She invited him to come to Paris to her; and, not doubting but he would inſtantly obey her ſummons, ſhe was now only ſolicitous how to reconcile Henrietta to her conduct, and oblige her to keep her ſecret.

The unexpected news of Mr. Melvil's being ſtill in Paris, and Mr. Freeman's acknowledgment of his friend's paſſion for Henrietta, anſwered all her views.

She

She imputed the reserve Henrietta had been enabled to maintain, less to her own virtue than to the unenterprizing temper of her lover; and was persuaded that the discovery she had made of her tenderness for him, would put the affair upon such a footing, as to make her less rigid in her remonstrances with respect to Mr. Morley.

CHAP. IV.

WHICH CONTAINS A VERY INTERESTING DISCOVERY.

FREEMAN, though persuaded that Miss Belmour was a woman of intrigue, and by consequence entertaining no elevated idea of her companion, found himself so awed by the modesty that shone in her countenance, and the dignity of her person and manner, that he was at some loss how to introduce the subject which had brought him thither. Henrietta, however, innocently led him to it, by expressing her surprize to see him still in Paris.

'You say nothing of my friend, Ma-
'dam,' said Freeman; 'and this indif-
'ference with regard to him is a very
'bad omen.'

'I hope Mr. Melvil is well,' said Henrietta, gravely, without seeming to take any notice of the strange speech he had made.

'He is better than he was three or four
'days ago,' replied Freeman, 'when
'his physicians despaired of his life.'

'Bless me!' cried Henrietta, with an emotion she could not suppress, 'has
'Mr. Melvil been so ill then? I am ex-
'tremely concerned to hear it.'

'You would, no doubt,' said Freeman, 'be more concerned if you knew
'you were the cause.'

'This kind of raillery, Mr. Free-
'man,' replied Henrietta, a little confused, 'is not at all agreeable to me, I
'assure you.'

'By Heaven I am serious,' resumed Freeman; 'my friend loves you with
'the utmost ardour: I am a witness to
'the birth and progress of his passion,
'and to his fruitless endeavours to con-
'quer it. The effort he made to leave
'Paris has almost cost him his life; he
'was taken ill the evening before our in-
'tended departure. Oh, Miss Benson! had you heard with what tenderness he
'called upon your name, when the vio-
'lence of his fever had deprived him of
'his senses, I am sure you must have
'pitied him.'

Freeman perceived, by the changes in Henrietta's countenance, that she did not hear him without emotion. He paused, in expectation of some pretty affected answer, that would give hope while it seemed to destroy it; but Henrietta, with a composed look and accent, replied—

'If I am to believe this account of
'your friend's illness not exaggerated,
'permit me to ask you, Sir, what is
'your design by making me acquainted
'with his sentiments, and what you ex-
'pect from me upon this occasion?'

Freeman was a little disconcerted by this speech, and at the manner in which she delivered it; but, relying on the intelligence he had received from Miss Belmour—

'I expect you will have compassion
'on my friend,' said he, 'and give him
'an opportunity to declare to you him-
'self the passion you have inspired him
'with.'

'I will be very free with you, Mr.
'Freeman,' replied Henrietta; 'your
'ready concurrence with your friend in
'the liking you say he has entertained
'for me, is not consistent with your good
'sense and prudence. Mr. Melvil is a
'young man of rank and fortune; I am
'poor and dependent; my birth, perhaps,
'greatly inferior to his. Will his pa-
'rents, think you, approve of such a
'choice?'

'What have parents to do with a ten-
'der engagement?' interrupted Free-
man; 'an engagement in which the
'heart only is consulted.'

'Were my heart ever so well disposed
'in favour of your friend,' resumed Henrietta, not willing to understand him, 'I would not receive his addresses with-
'out the sanction of his parents con-
'sent.'

Freeman could hardly help smiling at this formal declaration; and, supposing that the best way to drive these strange notions out of her head, was to acquaint her with Melvil's quality, which he likewise expected would have no small influence over her—

'It is not fit,' said he, 'that you
'should be any longer ignorant of the
'rank of him whom your charms have
'subjected. Melvil is not the name of

'my friend; he is the heir of an illustri-
'ous title and a great estate: he loves
'you, he will make your fortune; do
'not throw away this opportunity of
'freeing yourself from poverty and de-
'pendance, nor let a romantick notion
'of virtue deprive you of the advan-
'tages that are offered you.'

'Hold, Sir,' interrupted Henrietta, rising from her chair, 'this insult is too
'plain; I ought not to have listened to
'you so long.' She spoke this with tolerable composure; but, finding her tears begin to flow, she turned aside to conceal them, and hastily wiping her eyes, she looked on him again with a kind of calm disdain.

'I know not,' said she, 'what weak-
'ness you have discovered in my beha-
'viour, to encourage you to make me
'such shocking proposals; but I may
'venture to tell you, though I am not
'the mistress of this apartment, that the
'doors of it shall never be open to you
'again.'

She was hurrying out of the room when she had spoke this, leaving Freeman in so much confusion, that he knew not what to say to her, when Miss Belmour entered with a letter in her hand.

'Do you know a gentleman of the
'name of Damer,' said she to Henrietta,
'who is at present at Montpelier?'

'I do, Madam,' replied she, looking eagerly at the letter.

'Then this letter is for you, I sup-
'pose,' said Miss Belmour; 'it was
'inclosed in another to me, and directed
'to my banker's: but is your name
'Courteney? you see the superscription
'is for Miss Courteney.'

'The letter is certainly for me, Ma-
'dam,' said Henrietta, blushing.

'Oh! then,' replied Miss Belmour, smiling, and giving it to her, 'I have
'discovered a secret, I find.'

Henrietta retired immediately; and Miss Belmour approached Mr. Freeman, who stood leaning over his chair, with his eyes fixed on the ground.

'What is the matter with you?' said she; 'you look excessively pale.'

'Where is Miss Benson, Madam?' said he, starting out of his reverie at the sound of her voice.

'She is in her own chamber, I be-
'lieve,' replied Miss Belmour; 'but
'did you take notice of what passed
'about the letter? I delivered it to her
'before you on purpose: you see she in
'a manner owned that Courteney is her
'true name; is not this strange?'

'I must beg leave to speak to her
'again,' said he, interrupting her, and making towards the door; 'which way,
'pray, Madam?'

Miss Belmour followed him, surprized at the agitation he appeared to be in; and pointing to a room just opposite, 'you will find her there,' said she.

Freeman opened the door without any ceremony. Henrietta, who was reading her letter, looked up at the noise he made in entering: 'This is extremely rude,
'Sir,' said she; 'I desire you will in-
'stantly be gone, and trouble me no
'more.' But, apprehensive that he would not quit her so easily, she rushed by him, and was running to the room in which she had left Miss Belmour: he took hold of her hand, to prevent her leaving him; and she was upon the point of expressing her resentment at the insolence of this treatment, in harsher terms than any she had yet used, when she saw tears gush in great abundance from his eyes. Moved at this sight she stood still, but endeavoured to disengage her hand, looking at him earnestly, and in the utmost astonishment.

'O my sister!' cried he at last, bursting into a fresh flood of tears; 'my dear,
'dear sister!'—He was not able to utter a word more, but led her gently back to her chamber, which she permitted, trembling, confused, and full of anxious expectation.

'How strangely you look upon me!'
said he; 'do you doubt whether I am
'your brother?'

'I know not what to think,' replied she, shrinking from his embrace; for he had folded his arms about her.

'Dear girl!' cried he, 'how amiable
'is this sweet reserve, these modest
'doubts—but it is certain I am your
'brother, my Henrietta: is it possible
'your memory retains no traces of my
'features? in yours, methinks, I see a
'lively resemblance of my dear mother.
'How dull was I that I did not discover
'it before! but how could I expect to
'meet you in France, in such a situation,
'and under a disguised name! Oh! my
'dear sister, these circumstances distract
'me—Good Heaven! what a part have
'I acted—I perceive you are still per-
'plexed,' pursued he, after a little pause; and, taking a miniature picture out of his pocket, 'You will certainly be able
'to

'to recollect your mother's picture,' said he, 'which she gave me at parting.'

Henrietta looked at the picture, kissed it, and then threw herself in tears upon her brother's neck. 'Forgive my doubts,' said she, 'it is many years since I have 'seen you; we were children when we 'parted, but now I am convinced you 'are my brother: my heart tells me so 'without this dear testimony,' pursued she, kissing again the picture of her mother, which she still held; then suddenly clasping her hands together, and lifting up her fine eyes, which were swimming in tears—'I thank thee, O my God!' said she, 'for restoring to me my bro-'ther:' and, turning again to him with an affectionate look, 'A few moments 'ago,' said she, 'I thought myself very 'unhappy, but now you will be a friend 'and protector to me.'

He tenderly kissed her cheek—'What 'a wretch have I been!' said he, sighing.—'Indeed, my dear sister, I never 'shall forgive myself for having igno-'rantly practised on your virtue.'

'Oh! that my brother,' replied Henrietta, 'would be taught by this acci-'dent, never more to form designs 'against innocence; and, in cases like 'mine, to consider every virtuous young 'woman as a sister.'

Mr. Courteney, for so we shall now call him, was extremely moved at these words. He gazed at her some moments with mingled tenderness and delight; but all on a sudden, as if struck with some painful reflection—

'Henrietta,' said he, with a look and accent greatly altered from his former sweetness, 'why came you to France? 'and how has it happened that you are 'intimately connected with this woman, 'this Miss Belmour?'

'Why, do you know any harm of 'Miss Belmour?' said Henrietta, frighted at his sternness.

'You don't answer my question,' replied he, peevishly.

'Alas! my dear brother,' said Henrietta, 'I have a long and melancholy 'story to tell you: I have been reduced 'to great distress; my aunt, with whom 'you supposed me so happily settled, has 'treated me unkindly: I must confess, 'indeed, I have not been wholly free 'from blame; but you shall know all 'some other time. As for Miss Bel-'mour, I was recommended to her—— 'I would not shock you, brother; but 'I have been obliged to go to service; 'and I was recommended to Miss Bel-'mour by two ladies of quality, her near 'relations.'

Mr. Courteney sighed deeply at this account, and remained for several moments silent; at length recovering himself—

'Miss Belmour, it seems,' said he, 'did not always know your real name. 'You appear to be on the footing of a 'companion.'

'Miss Belmour was pleased to take 'a liking to me,' said Henrietta; 'and, 'though ignorant of my birth, would 'not suffer me to continue with her in 'the character of a servant. I have been 'greatly obliged to her.'

'Yes, you are obliged to her,' interrupted Mr. Courteney, kindling into rage at the remembrance of what had passed between them. 'Infamous wretch! 'she has done her part towards betray-'ing you to ruin. You have been very 'imprudent, Henrietta; you have talked 'to her of Mr. Melvil too freely: she 'believes you are in love with him, and 'told me so, to encourage my attempts 'upon you.'

Henrietta blushed at the mention of Mr. Melvil; and presently after burst into tears at this discovery of Miss Belmour's baseness and ingratitude, but uttered not a word of complaint or resentment.

'I will not suffer you to remain any 'longer with her,' resumed Mr. Courteney; 'I will go directly and provide 'you lodgings in the house of a worthy 'English family: I suppose you can 'have no objection to this proposal.'

'Why do you look and speak so coldly, my dear brother?' said Henrietta. 'To be sure I can have no objection; dis-'pose of me as you please; you are in 'the place of my father; I will obey 'you as such.'

'Forgive me, my dear,' said he, tenderly pressing her hand, 'my temper is 'warm; I have spoke to you harshly: 'indeed, I am greatly alarmed at the 'disagreeable circumstances I find you 'in: you have been to blame, you own. 'Alas! my dear sister, what have you 'done to be thus abandoned by your 'aunt? I shall be on the rack till I have 'heard all your story; but this is not a 'proper place. Take a civil leave of 'Miss Belmour, but do not acquaint 'her that you have discovered your

'brother, for I know not yet what measures I shall take. I will call for you 'in less than an hour in a coach.'

Henrietta promised to be ready; he took a tender leave of her, and departed.

CHAP. V.

THE HISTORY CONTINUED.

OUR fair heroine continued some time alone in her chamber, so transported at this unexpected meeting with her brother, that she sometimes doubted whether her happiness was real, and whether all that had passed was not an illusion of her fancy. When her spirits were a little composed, she began to consider what reason she should give Miss Belmour for quitting her so suddenly: she rightly judged that the secrecy her brother had recommended to her, proceeded from his embarrassment with regard to Mr. Melvil; and she resolved, however strange her going away might appear to Miss Belmour, to follow his directions punctually.

The treachery this young lady had been guilty of towards her, excited less resentment than grief for the conviction it brought her that her principles were not changed. Several circumstances now rushed upon her memory, which served to convince her she was relapsing into her former indiscretions; and she doubted not but Miss Belmour would be rejoiced to be delivered from her presence. This thought gave her courage to go to her immediately, and acquaint her with her intention.

'A strange alteration has happened 'in my affairs, Madam,' said she, entering her apartment, 'within this 'hour.'

'That letter has brought you some 'good news, I suppose,' said Miss Belmour, coldly.

'It came from a dear and worthy 'friend, Madam,' replied Henrietta; 'and I have indeed heard some good 'news, which I little expected: but I 'am obliged to leave you, and so suddenly, that I am afraid you will think 'me ungrateful for your kindness, in 'submitting to this necessity.'

'Pray make no apologies,' interrupted Miss Belmour, with great indifference; 'you are entirely at your li-'berty.'

Henrietta, who thought she had reason for this behaviour, was studying for some answer, which, without revealing the secret motive of her conduct, might tend in some measure to excuse it; when a servant introduced a gentleman into the room, who, though she had seen but once, she knew immediately to be Mr. Morley. She turned eagerly to observe how Miss Belmour was affected by this visit; and discovering no signs of surprize or anger in her countenance, but an excess of joy and satisfaction, she concluded this meeting was concerted, and retired immediately, in great concern, to her own room.

Here, while she waited her brother's return, she employed herself in writing to Miss Belmour. In this letter she repeated what she had often urged before, to guard her against the base designs of her lover: she recalled to her remembrance the resolution she had made, and the vows with which she had sealed it, never more to listen to his destructive addresses; and conjured her, by every motive of religion, honour, and virtue, to banish from her sight a man whose only aim was to ruin her.

She had scarce finished her letter, when a servant came to tell her that some company waited for her in a coach. She made haste to seal it, and gave it to Miss Belmour's maid, with orders to deliver it to her lady. At the door she found her brother, who helped her into the coach, and came in after her. He asked her, smiling, how she had parted with Miss Belmour?

Henrietta told him, she had left her with company. 'It is indifferent to me 'what company she sees now you are not 'with her,' said he: 'but my heart will 'not be at rest till I hear all your story, 'sister.'

Henrietta promised to satisfy him when they were arrived at her new lodgings. 'I am also impatient,' said she, 'to 'know your adventures; why you called 'yourself Freeman, and what was the 'cause of your not writing to me for so 'many months past.'

'To say the truth, my dear sister,' said he, 'I have been guilty of a little 'neglect in not writing to you oftener: 'however, some of my letters must certainly have miscarried; for I wrote to 'you both from Brussels and Genoa, 'and I don't remember I had any answer. 'The account you gave me of Mr. Da-

'mer's

'mer's kindneſs in taking upon him the 'office of your guardian, and your 'happy ſettlement with Lady Meadows, 'made me perfectly eaſy with regard to 'you. I had informed you that I was 'appointed governor to the Marquis of '——. This young nobleman had con-'tracted a friendſhip with me, during 'his ſtay at Leyden, where his governor 'dying, he wrote to his father, the Duke 'of——, in ſuch preſſing terms in my 'favour, which, joined to the knowledge 'of my birth, and very high recom-'mendations from the univerſity, had 'ſo much weight with him, that his 'Grace, notwithſtanding my youth, ap-'pointed me governer to his ſon, with 'a ſalary of five hundred pounds a year. 'I have endeavoured to acquit myſelf 'faithfully of this truſt; my pupil and 'I have always lived together like bro-'thers; and I flatter myſelf his father 'will have no cauſe to repent his having 'conſigned him to my care.'

'But why did you take the names of 'Melvil and Freeman?' interrupted Henrietta.

'The marquis,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'had an inclination to travel 'without the parade of quality, that he 'might, as he wrote to his father, make 'nearer and more uſeful obſervations 'upon men and manners; and, being 'indulged in this ſcheme, we have tra-'velled through France and Italy under 'thoſe names, and with a very ſmall 'equipage. And now, Henrietta, that 'you know the quality of my friend, I 'expect you will not entertain any ridi-'culous hopes from the liking he has 'expreſſed for you. I will do him the 'juſtice to own that he never formed any 'diſhonourable deſigns upon you. The 'character of the woman you lived with, 'encouraged me to make you ſome 'ſhocking propoſals. You behaved very 'properly; but, my dear ſiſter, no words 'can expreſs my anguiſh and confuſion, 'when I heard you own the name of 'Courteney, and your connections with 'Mr. Damer. Good Heaven! what 'did I ſuffer at that moment—What 'a wretch did I ſeem in my own eyes!'

'Let not this cruel remembrance diſ-'turb you now, my dear brother,' ſaid Henrietta; 'I am ſo happy in finding 'you, that I forget all my paſt un-'eaſineſſes.'

Her looks bore delightful witneſs to the truth of what ſhe ſaid. Joy ſparkled in her charming eyes, heightened the roſy bloom of her complexion, and animated her whole air: but, dearly as ſhe loved her brother, the aſſurance he gave her, that her lover had no part in the diſhonourable propoſals he had made her, was a circumſtance that greatly increaſed her ſatisfaction in this meeting.

Mr. Courteney looked at her with admiration and delight, while a tender ſenſe of the misfortunes ſhe had been expoſed to almoſt melted him into tears. As ſoon as the coach ſtopped, he told her, that the maſter of the houſe they were going into was a very worthy man, with whom he was intimately acquainted, and whoſe prudence he could depend upon. 'His wife,' purſued he, 'is a virtuous, 'ſenſible woman: I know no family ſo 'proper to place you in as this; and it 'was extremely lucky that I thought 'of them upon this occaſion, for it was 'not fit you ſhould ſtay with Miſs Bel-'mour, and in ſo ſhort a time it was dif-'ficult to diſpoſe of you properly.'

As ſoon as they alighted, Mrs. Knight came to receive Henrietta, and preſented her huſband to her. Both ſeemed greatly charmed with her appearance, and politely thanked Mr. Courteney for bringing them ſo agreeable a gueſt.

After a few compliments they withdrew, ſuppoſing the brother and ſiſter would be glad of an opportunity to converſe together in private. Mr. Courteney immediately drew his chair near his ſiſter's, and, with a look of impatience, demanded the account ſhe had promiſed him.

Henrietta bluſhed, and begged him not to judge her errors too ſeverely. She then gave him a candid relation of all that had happened to her, from her mother's death till the time ſhe met him at the inn, concealing nothing from him but Miſs Belmour's paſſion for Mr. Morley.

Mr. Courteney was variouſly affected during the courſe of her little ſtory. He often changed countenance, but would not interrupt her. He obſerved with pleaſure, that ſhe laid no ſtreſs upon any part of her conduct, which might with juſtice challenge eſteem and admiration, but appeared nicely conſcious of every little imprudence; and, when ſhe had ended, waited for his reply, with an anxiety that ſhewed ſhe rather expected cenſure than praiſe.

'My

'My dear Henrietta,' said Mr. Courteney, at length, with tears in his eyes; 'you have acted nobly; you cannot 'imagine how much your sufferings endear you to me, since you have behaved under them with such becoming 'fortitude.'

'How happy you make me,' cried Henrietta, 'by your approbation. Indeed, I was afraid you would have 'chidden me severely for leaving my 'aunt in the manner I did.'

'It was a rash step,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'but your subsequent conduct 'has effaced it; and I see not how you 'could have otherwise avoided being in 'the power of that villain-priest.'

After some farther conversation on different parts of her story, he looked at his watch: 'How fast the minutes fly!' said he, smiling. 'My dear Henrietta, 'I must leave you now, yet I have a 'thousand things to say to you; but I 'will see you to-morrow morning. You 'will be very happy,' continued he, 'with Mrs. Knight, and I shall have 'no scruple to trust you to her care, till 'I have conducted the marquis to London: we shall go in a day or two; and, 'after I have delivered my charge safe 'to his father, I will come back to 'Paris, and fetch you.'

Henrietta turned pale at these words: 'Then we are to part again soon!' said she, in a melancholy accent.

'It would be highly improper for 'you,' replied he, 'to take this journey with us, on several accounts: I 'shall be concerned to leave you, but 'it must be so.'

'Could you not stay till Mr. Damer 'comes?' interrupted Henrietta; and, taking his letter out of her pocket, 'see 'here how affectionately he writes to 'me,' added she: 'he proposes to be 'in Paris in three weeks, and insists 'upon my going to England with him.'

Mr. Courteney read the letter with great pleasure. Mr. Damer addressed her in it by the tender name of daughter; and assured her, that he would in every respect act like a father towards her. He praised her conduct in terms of the highest admiration; and begged her not to be uneasy at her aunt's desertion of her, since it was in his power to make her easy, and he was resolved to do so.

'This letter,' said Mr. Courteney, after a pause, 'will make some little alteration in my plan: I had resolved not 'to take any notice to the marquis, that 'I had discovered you to be my sister, 'but to make some excuse for your disappearing; however, I see it will be 'necessary to wait for Mr. Damer. I 'congratulate you, my dear Henrietta, 'on the friendship of so worthy a man.'

'But will you stay till he comes to 'Paris?' interrupted the tender, anxious Henrietta.

'May I depend upon your prudence, 'sister?' said Mr. Courteney. 'It is 'possible the marquis may talk to you 'of love: if you give him the least encouragement, you will forfeit my 'esteem for ever; it shall never be said, 'that I took advantage of his youth to 'draw him into a marriage with my 'sister.'

'O! do not suspect me of such meanness,' said Henrietta, blushing: 'if 'the marquis was a thousand times 'more amiable than he is, and were I 'ever so much prejudiced in his favour, 'I have too just a sense of what I owe 'to my birth, to your honour, and my 'own, to admit of a clandestine address——You may be entirely easy 'upon this article.'

'I am satisfied,' replied Mr. Courteney, tenderly pressing her hand; 'and 'now, my dear Henrietta, adieu for this 'evening.'

'Don't fail to come to-morrow,' said she, following him to the door. He smiled assentingly; and, having taken leave of Mrs. Knight, who met him as he was going in search of her, he hurried home to his pupil, by whom he was expected with extreme impatience.

CHAP. VI.

FARTHER CONTINUATION OF THE HISTORY.

THE marquis, as soon as he entered his chamber, perceived that something extraordinary had happened to him.

'Sure,' said he, smiling, 'you have 'met with some strange adventure, 'Freeman; you look pleased, and yet 'there is a thoughtful air in your countenance.'

'I have had an adventure indeed,' replied Mr. Courteney, entering abruptly into

into an affair which could not be concealed from him; 'I have met with my 'sister here in Paris.'

'Your sister!' repeated the marquis; 'you did not expect her, did you?'

'No, faith,' replied Mr. Courteney; 'nor did I know her when I saw 'her.'

'That is not surprizing,' said the marquis; 'she was very young when 'you parted, I have heard you say: I 'hope you will allow me to pay my 'respects to her. But,' added he, impatiently, 'how does Miss Belmour and 'her fair friend?'

'Her fair friend, as you are pleased 'to call her,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'is my sister, whom for so many weeks 'I have seen almost every day without 'knowing her.'

'Is it possible!' cried the marquis, surprized: 'Miss Benson your sister! 'Sure you are not in earnest?'

'Indeed I am,' said Mr. Courteney, 'I discovered her by the oddest accident. 'Miss Belmour herself did not know 'who she was; but while I was there, 'she brought her a letter, which had 'been inclosed to her; it was directed 'for Miss Courteney; and came from 'Mr. Damer, my sister's guardian: she 'owned the name, and by that means 'I found out my sister. I see you are 'astonished,' added Mr. Courteney. 'Poor Henrietta has told me all her 'story; the repetition would be tedious, 'but——'

'How can you think so?' interrupted the marquis, eagerly: 'can you doubt 'that I am extremely interested in every 'thing that concerns you?'

'Excuse me, my dear marquis,' said Mr. Courteney, 'I really cannot enter 'into particulars just now—Fortune 'still persecutes my dear father in his 'children. I thought my sister was 'happily settled with her aunt Lady 'Meadows, who has no child, and 'adopted her; but the old lady, being 'a rigid Roman Catholick, pressed her 'very much to change her religion, 'and was at last so strangely influenced 'by an artful priest, who is her chaplain, 'that she had formed a design to send 'my sister, under the conduct of this fellow, to be shut up in a nunnery. The 'poor girl, who was, as I can collect by 'her account, extremely apprehensive 'of being so entirely in the power of this 'sly priest, had no way to avoid this 'misfortune, but by leaving her aunt 'privately, who absolutely refused to 'be reconciled to her on any other condition than her changing her religion. 'Thus deserted, her guardian being 'abroad, and having nothing to expect 'from her relations, she chose to go to 'service, and was recommended to Miss 'Belmour, by the Countess of ———, 'her kinswoman.'

'What a wretch must your uncle be!' said the marquis, with tears in his eyes, 'to permit such excellence——' He stopped a moment; then suddenly grasping his hand, 'O my dear Freeman,' pursued he, 'you have it in your power 'to make me happy——You know 'how ardently I love your charming 'sister——'

'This I was apprehensive of,' interrupted Mr. Courteney. 'I beg, 'my lord, that you will banish these 'thoughts.'

'What!' cried the marquis, hastily; 'have you any objection to my passion 'for your sister?'

'Indeed I have, and a very strong 'one,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'and 'that is the certainty of the duke your 'father's disapprobation of it.'

'It is possible indeed,' said the marquis, after a little pause, 'that in the 'choice of a wife for me, my father will 'be influenced by the same motives that 'most fathers are: he will expect a large 'fortune with the person I marry; there'fore, my dear Charles, you see the ne'cessity there is for not consulting him 'in this case.'

'Sure you forget, my lord,' interrupted Mr. Courteney, coolly, 'what 'you once declared, that you would 'never enter into an engagement of this 'kind, contrary to the duke's inclina'tions.'

'I remember I said so,' replied the marquis; 'and were I to make a choice 'which he could reasonably object to, 'certainly it would be wrong, very 'wrong, to disobey him: but if the 'want of a fortune can make my father 'disapprove of my affection for a young 'lady of Miss Courteney's birth and 'merit, must I be governed by such 'sordid motives?'

The marquis went on to prove, by a great many arguments, common enough on such occasions, that, in the article of marriage,

marriage, a parent had no right to lay any reſtraint upon the inclinations of his child. Mr. Courteney did not think proper to enter into a diſpute with him upon this ſubject: the patience with which he liſtened to him, made the young nobleman conclude he was not unwilling to come into his meaſures.

'My dear Charles,' added he, after a ſhort pauſe, 'will you not be my advocate with your charming ſiſter? I die 'with impatience to throw myſelf at 'her feet, and offer her my heart and 'hand.'

'You cannot doubt, my lord,' ſaid Mr. Courteney, 'but that I think my 'ſiſter highly honoured by the eſteem 'you expreſs for her; but ſhe would be 'very unworthy of it, if ſhe was capable of admitting your addreſſes, either 'unknown to your father, or in oppoſition to his will. I may venture to 'anſwer for her, that ſhe will not, by 'ſo unjuſtifiable a conduct, expoſe her 'brother to cenſure: and it gives me 'great concern to find you are no better 'acquainted with my ſentiments, than 'to imagine I will ſo baſely betray the 'truſt the duke has repoſed in me, and 'be acceſſary to your diſpoſing of your'ſelf in a manner which I am very ſure he will not approve.'

'Then I am to expect nothing from 'your friendſhip on this occaſion, Mr. 'Courteney!' replied the marquis, with an air of diſpleaſure: 'you are deter'mined to raiſe difficulties to my deſign, 'inſtead of removing them; is this act'ing like a man whom I have loved like 'a brother, and whom it would be my 'higheſt happineſs to call ſo?'

'To call you brother with your fa'ther's conſent, my lord,' ſaid Mr. Courteney, 'is an honour I cannot 'hope for, and which, without it, I do 'not wiſh.'

'As noble and diſintereſted as you 'imagine this conduct to be,' ſaid the marquis, riſing, 'it will have another 'name, perhaps, with perſons leſs ro'mantick in their notions than you are. 'However, Sir, you are no more than 'the brother of Miſs Courteney: if I 'am happy enough to prevail with her 'to receive my addreſſes, I ſhall not 'think your conſent neceſſary.' He paſſed by him with a cool bow, as he pronounced theſe words, and retired to his own chamber.

CHAP. VII.

IN WHICH WE ARE AFRAID SOME OF OUR READERS WILL THINK MR. COURTENEY ACTS A VERY SILLY PART.

MR. Courteney ſaw plainly, that by refuſing to comply with his pupil's deſires, he ſhould entirely loſe his friendſhip; but, in a caſe where his honour was ſo greatly concerned, this conſideration had no weight with him: and although he had a high opinion of his ſiſter's candour and integrity, yet the intimation Miſs Belmour had given him of her regard for Mr. Melvil, made him apprehenſive that ſhe might be prevailed upon to liſten to the vows of the Marquis of ——. He reſolved, therefore, to keep the place of her abode a ſecret, (for he knew he could depend upon the prudence of Mr. Knight and his wife) and to uſe his utmoſt endeavours to haſten the young lord's departure from France.

The marquis, mean time, was forming very different deſigns. It is ſo rare a thing for a man in love to be either reaſonable or juſt, on occaſions where the intereſt of his paſſion is concerned, that it is not ſurprizing the marquis ſhould impute his governor's conduct with regard to his ſiſter to peeviſhneſs and caprice, and think himſelf extremely ill uſed by his not accepting his offers. He conceived Miſs Courteney to be equally injured by the oppoſition her brother made to the advancement of her fortune; and flattering himſelf that, if his perſon was not diſagreeable to her, he ſhould ſoon overcome any ſcruples Mr. Courteney might have ſuggeſted on account of the duke his father's diſapprobation, he determined to conſult him no farther in the affair, but to addreſs himſelf directly to her.

He ſpent part of the night in writing a letter to her, in which he declared his paſſion in the moſt tender and reſpectful terms, and begged ſhe would allow him to wait upon her. The remaining hours were not ſpent in ſleep, but impatient longings for the morning, which was to confirm or deſtroy his hopes. As ſoon as it was light, he roſe and walked about his room. He read over the letter he had written; he thought it but poorly expreſſed the ardour of his love: he ſat down

down and wrote another, which he liked ſtill leſs, and had recourſe again to the firſt, after adding a poſtſcript, in which he earneſtly repeated his requeſt to be indulged with a few moments private diſcourſe with her.

He ſealed up his letter, and directed it for Miſs Courteney. Her brother had not mentioned to him his having removed her from Miſs Belmour: he ſuppoſed ſhe was ſtill with her; but a doubt occurring to him, whether ſhe was willing to aſſume her real name yet, he thought it beſt to put it in another cover, ſuperſcribed for Miſs Benſon.

It was ſtill too early to ſend to a lady's lodgings; he counted the hours with anxious impatience, and at length rung his bell for his ſervant. As ſoon as he appeared, he gave him the letter, recommending ſecrecy, and charging him not to return without an anſwer.

The valet, when he came back, brought him word that Miſs Benſon was gone; and this was all the intelligence he could get. Miſs Belmour's woman indeed had added with a ſneer, that ſhe went off with Mr. Freeman, and it was ſtrange that his friend Mr. Melvil ſhould not know where ſhe was. This part of the meſſage the fellow prudently ſuppreſſed; for he judged the buſineſs to be an amour, and that the young gentlemen were rivals, and he was afraid of making miſchief.

The marquis, however, eaſily gueſſed that this ſudden removal of Miſs Courteney was her brother's act: he diſmiſſed his ſervant; and beginning now to be ſenſible how much it was in his governor's power to traverſe his deſigns, and how obſtinately he was bent upon doing ſo, he reſigned himſelf up to the moſt violent tranſports of rage; and, during a few moments, all his thoughts ran upon revenge.

Mr. Courteney came into his chamber while he was under theſe agitations; and, ſeeing him walking about with a furious pace—'For Heaven's ſake, my 'lord,' ſaid he, 'what is the matter 'with you?'

The marquis turned ſhort upon him, and, with a voice broken with paſſion, exclaimed—'May I periſh, Courteney, 'if I forgive you!'

Mr. Courteney, who ſuppoſed this reſentment was the conſequence of their converſation the night before, replied calmly—'You are angry, my lord; 'this is no time to talk.'

He was going out of the room, but the marquis, haſtily ſtepping between him and the door, ſhut it with great violence.

'If it is not your time to talk, Sir, it 'is mine,' ſaid he.

'Very well, my lord,' replied Mr. Courteney, with a compoſed look and accent, 'I am ready to hear you.'

The young nobleman continued to walk in a ſullen ſilence, as if reſolved to be angry, and knew not well what cauſe to aſſign for it; when ſuddenly ſtopping—

'I inſiſt upon your telling me, Sir,' ſaid he, 'why you have ſecreted your 'ſiſter? Do you ſuſpect I have diſho-'nourable deſigns upon her?'

'Diſhonourable deſigns upon my 'ſiſter!' repeated Mr. Courteney, kindling at the expreſſion: 'my lord, no 'man, while I have life, ſhall incur ſuch 'a ſuſpicion with impunity.'

'This ſpirit becomes one of your 'birth,' replied the marquis; 'but let 'me tell you, Mr. Courteney, your con-'duct is not altogether conſiſtent; why 'muſt your ſiſter be hurried, nobody 'knows whither, and concealed with 'ſuch wonderful caution?'

'Are you ſure this is the caſe, my 'lord?' ſaid Mr. Courteney.

'Yes, very ſure,' anſwered the marquis, haſtily.

'Since it was not I who gave your 'lordſhip this information,' reſumed Mr. Courteney, 'you muſt have taken 'ſome trouble to come to the knowledge 'of it; and the motive that ſet you upon 'theſe enquiries ſufficiently juſtifies my 'caution with regard to my ſiſter.'

'Then I am not worthy, it ſeems, to 'pay my addreſſes to your ſiſter,' ſaid the marquis, peeviſhly.

'Indeed, my lord, this is a very 'childiſh ſpeech,' replied Mr. Courteney: 'you know your addreſſes would 'do honour to any woman; but the de-'preſſed ſtate of my ſiſter's fortune 'leaves her no right to expect a man of 'your quality for a huſband; and ſhe 'has too juſt a pride to ſubmit to make 'a clandeſtine marriage; nor will I be 'branded with the imputation of having 'ſeduced my pupil into a marriage with 'my ſiſter.'

'What have you to do with the affair

'at all?' replied the marquis, eagerly: 'leave Miss Courteney to act as she 'thinks proper; you need not make 'yourself answerable for my conduct on 'this occasion. I loved her before I 'knew her to be your sister; cannot your 'romantick honour satisfy itself with 'being passive in this business?'

'I should but ill perform my engage-'ments to your father, my lord,' interrupted Mr. Courteney, 'if I did not use 'my utmost endeavours to prevent you 'from displeasing him in a matter of so 'great importance as your marriage.'

'How are you sure my father will be 'displeased?' said the marquis: 'Miss 'Courteney's merit will justify my 'choice.'

'Put it upon that issue,' replied Mr. Courteney; 'ask his consent.'

'Well, Sir, I will ask his consent,' resumed the marquis; 'and now am I 'at liberty to visit your sister?'

'If you intend, my lord, to be go-'verned by the duke's advice,' said Mr. Courteney, 'you will certainly be con-'tented to wait his answer; and you 'cannot suppose that, knowing your 'sentiments so well as I do, I will per-'mit my sister to receive your visits 'while we are ignorant of the duke's in-'tentions.'

The marquis lost all patience at this unreasonable obstinacy, as he conceived it. 'I renounce your friendship from 'this moment,' said he, 'for ever; and, 'had you not a sister, I would resent 'this behaviour in another manner.'

He flung out of the room when he had said this; and, shutting himself up in his study, gave his valet orders to allow no body to disturb him.

Mr. Courteney was not so much offended at the harshness of his language, as to hinder him from feeling great concern for the uneasy state of his mind; and, notwithstanding his own temper was vehement enough, yet he was able to make some allowances for the transports of a young man, who saw himself so resolutely opposed in a point he had set his heart upon: but despairing to pacify his pupil without entering into his design, he determined to place his sister effectually out of his reach; and then, if he could not prevail upon him to return to England, nothing remained but to make the duke his father acquainted with the whole affair.

He waited some time in expectation that the marquis would come down to breakfast as usual; but finding that he had ordered his chocolate to be brought to him in his study, he went to visit his sister, as he had promised.

The marquis heard him, as he passed by his door, call for his hat and sword; and his valet entering a moment afterwards with the chocolate, he asked him, if Mr. Freeman was gone out? Being answered that he was, it suddenly came into his head that he was going to see his sister.

'Follow him instantly,' said he to the fellow, 'and bring me word to what 'place he goes; and here is something 'to purchase your secrecy and diligence.'

The sight of five Louis d'ors, which the marquis gave him, left the valet no inclination to be discreet any longer. He ran out of the room with officious haste, fully determined to execute his commission with the utmost exactness. When he got into the street, he perceived Mr. Courteney walking leisurely on: he followed him at a distance; took particular notice of the house he entered; and, after waiting a few moments to see whether he came out again, he went back to the marquis with his intelligence.

The young lover did not doubt but he had discovered his mistress's abode; and in the joy this thought gave him, he bestowed many praises on his valet's ingenuity, together with a reward of five Louis d'ors more, which he liked still better. He then ordered him to give directions for his chariot to be got ready, while he assisted him to dress. His looks discovered such an excess of satisfaction, that the valet, under no apprehensions that what he had done would produce any disagreeable consequences, entered with vast delight upon his new post of confident to his master. The marquis ordered him to stay at home till Mr. Freeman came in, and then immediately to come to him at the Hotel de ——.

CHAP. VIII.

IN WHICH MR. COURTENEY GIVES MORE INSTANCES OF HIS FOLLY.

WHILE Henrietta thus innocently sowed the seeds of discord between the two friends, she herself enjoyed

joyed a perfect composure of mind, and indulged the most pleasing reflections on the happy change of her fortune.

She was no longer in the humiliating condition of a servant; or, what to her was far more mortifying, a dependant upon the bounty of another; an unknown wanderer, without friends or protectors. She was now under the care of a brother, whom she tenderly loved, whose merit could not fail of distinguishing him, and of forcing that respect and consideration due to a noble birth, and which he, though in a depressed fortune, so nobly supported.

She was assured that her guardian was not only free from any unfavourable prejudices on account of her aunt's desertion of her, but that she might expect all the tender offices of a parent from him; and, what afforded the nice sensibility of her soul a more delicate satisfaction than all this, the only man in the world whom she was capable of regarding with a preference to the rest of his sex, though in so elevated a rank, had loved her in indigence and obscurity with honour, and justified the tender sentiments she entertained for him.

Her smiles, when she saw her brother appear, and the gaiety of her behaviour, convinced him her mind was at ease; but his features still retained that impression of chagrin he had so lately felt from the marquis's causeless rage; and there was a solemnity in his manner, that, in an instant, changed the innocent chearfulness of Henrietta into anxiety and concern.

The presence of Mrs. Knight was a restraint upon them both. She perceived it; and as soon as the tea-table was removed, (for the ladies were at breakfast when Mr. Courteney came in) she retired and left them at liberty.

The moment she was gone, Henrietta eagerly asked him, if any thing had happened to give him uneasiness since she saw him?

'Yes,' replied he abruptly, 'the 'marquis and I have quarrelled.'

'Quarrelled!' repeated Henrietta, trembling and pale as death, 'have you 'quarrelled?'

Mr. Courteney, who observed her emotion, continued to look at her so earnestly, that she blushed and cast down her eyes. 'You seem greatly affected with 'this accident,' said he at last; 'I wish 'I had not mentioned it to you.'

'Could you suppose,' said Henrietta, in an accent which had at least as much of grief as tenderness in it, 'that I 'could hear with indifference what must 'necessarily be very afflicting to you?'

'Your indifference, perhaps, on this 'occasion,' said Mr. Courteney, 'would 'be more welcome to me than the con'cern I see you under.'

Henrietta having pondered a little on the meaning of these words, replied in a firmer tone, 'Place some confidence in 'me, brother; you will find I shall de'serve it.'

'My dear Henrietta,' resumed Mr. Courteney, affected with the manner in which she spoke, and her expressive look, 'you ought to forgive my doubts, when 'you reflect on what Miss Belmour 'told me: the merit of my noble pupil 'has made an impression on your heart; 'but your marriage with him, sister, 'will bring everlasting infamy upon 'me.'

'Have I not already declared my re'solution to you upon this head?' replied Henrietta.

'The marquis loves you,' resumed Mr. Courteney: 'he is rash and in'considerate; he has no hope (and in'deed it would be strange if he had) that 'the duke his father will consent to 'such an unequal match; yet he presses 'me to introduce him to you as a lover, 'and to favour his designs of marrying 'you privately. You may easily ima'gine what answer I gave him; the con'sequence is, that he has declared him'self my enemy. We are upon very 'bad terms. But this is not my greatest 'concern: the marquis, if he can get 'access to you, will teaze you with soli'citations; and, disposed as you are in 'his favour, have I not cause to ap'prehend you will listen to him but too 'readily?'

'Although I should confirm your 'suspicions,' said Henrietta, with tears in her eyes, 'yet I must again repeat, I 'am grieved at this difference between 'your pupil and you. Nay, I will 'own,' pursued she, avoiding with a sweet bashfulness the earnest looks of her brother, 'that I am not insensible 'of this young nobleman's affection for 'me; but, after this candid confession, 'you ought to believe me, when I assure 'you, that I will enter into no engage'ment with him without your approba'tion; and, to make you easy, I will

'comply with any measures you think 'proper, to avoid his pursuits.'

'I see I may rely upon you,' said Mr. Courteney, charmed with her amiable frankness; 'but, my dear Henrietta, I hope you will not allow this 'prepossession to take too deep root in 'your heart: sure your good sense, and 'the delicacy of your sentiments, will 'hinder you from giving way to a hopeless passion.'

'I beg you not to talk to me on this 'subject,' interrupted Henrietta, tears, in spite of her endeavours to restrain them, flowing fast down her face; 'only 'tell me what you would have me do to 'avoid the marquis: Have you formed 'any plan? Doubt not of my readiness 'to comply with it.'

'Have you any objections to boarding in a convent till Mr. Damer comes?' said Mr. Courteney.

'No,' replied Henrietta, half smiling, 'for I cannot suspect you have a 'design upon my religion, as my aunt 'had, and mean to confine me all my 'life.'

'No, really,' resumed Mr. Courteney, smiling likewise; 'but it will be 'more difficult for the marquis to get 'access to you in a convent than here; 'and, as it is probable enough that this 'affair will make some noise, it will be 'more for your reputation to have it 'known that you lived in such a respectable society, where there were so many 'witnesses of your conduct, and such 'exact regularity required, than in private lodgings, where you were accountable to nobody for your actions.'

'Then you intend to leave me before Mr. Damer comes?' said Henrietta, sighing.

'To be sure,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'I will force the marquis away if 'possible; and, if I find all my remonstrances ineffectual, the duke must interpose his authority.'

'You intend to write to him, then?' said Henrietta.

'Certainly,' replied he; 'don't you 'think I ought to do so, sister?'

'Indeed I do,' answered she.

'I am glad of it,' resumed Mr. Courteney, 'yet this procedure will embroil 'me more with the marquis; but I see 'no help for it, unless Mr. Damer should 'happen to come sooner than we expect, 'and take you with him to England. 'I hope to prevail upon my pupil to 'leave Paris in two or three days; and, 'if I have not the satisfaction to leave 'you under Mr. Damer's care, a convent is the fittest place for you to retire to.'

Henrietta, having reflected on her brother's proposal, found it so reasonable, and so much to the advantage of her reputation, that she readily yielded to put it in immediate execution.

Mrs. Knight being desired to return, Mr. Courteney told her their design, and requested her assistance. She expressed some concern at being so soon to lose her agreeable guest, but undertook to transact the affair; and it was resolved, that she should go that day, and procure the young lady to be admitted as a pensioner in the Augustine nunnery of English ladies in Paris.

Mr. Courteney, having promised his sister to come and conduct her to the convent the next day, took leave of her, highly satisfied with her docility, and returned home. He was surprized to hear that the marquis was gone abroad; but, having no suspicion of his intention to visit Henrietta, whose abode he concluded was still a secret to him, he was only concerned lest his head should suffer, by venturing out before it was fully re-established.

The marquis's valet no sooner saw Mr. Courteney return, than he ran immediately to acquaint his master, who set forwards, with a beating heart, to visit his mistress. The valet had given so exact a direction, that the coachman had no difficulty to find the house. The marquis alighted the moment the door was opened, and asking the servant for Miss Courteney, was instantly introduced into a parlour, where Henrietta was sitting alone, Mrs. Knight having just left her to go and execute her commission.

The sight of the marquis threw her into the utmost confusion. She rose, however, and received him with great respect: he approached her bowing, and made her a genteel compliment upon her happy meeting with her brother.

Henrietta would not suffer this subject to be dwelt upon long, lest it should lead to circumstances too interesting. She changed the conversation to indifferent matters, and took care that it should not flag a moment; so that the marquis, partly embarrassed by that awe which always accompanies a sincere passion, and partly

by

by the prudent management of Henrietta, found he had protracted his visit to a considerable length, without drawing any advantage from it.

Alarmed at the thoughts of losing an opportunity, which the rigid and inflexible temper of his governor might prevent him from meeting with again, he suddenly assumed courage to make her a declaration of his passion, but in terms the most tender and respectful, and with an explicitness that became one of his rank and fortune to use towards a young lady in her delicate circumstances, whom he would not for a moment leave in doubt of the sincerity of his professions, and his firm resolution to adhere to them.

Henrietta listened to them with a graceful modesty; and, when he earnestly pressed for her answer, she assured him, that she was very sensible of the honour he did her, and should always think herself obliged to him for having entertained such favourable sentiments of her, as could make him overlook the inequality there was between them. As for the rest, she referred him to her brother, who, she said, was in the place of a father to her, and by whose advice and direction she was determined to be governed entirely.

The marquis would have had no reason to be dissatisfied with this answer, if he had not known that he had nothing to expect from an application to her brother; and the apprehension that she also knew it, and therefore took this method to free herself from his importunities, gave him so much concern, that he turned pale, and sighing, fixed his eyes upon the ground. His air, his attitude, his looks, were all so moving, so expressive of tenderness, anxiety, and grief, that Henrietta durst not trust herself to behold him, lest he should turn his eyes towards her, and discover in hers the too great interest she took in his uneasiness.

Some moments passed in an affecting silence on both sides, during which the marquis remained immoveably fixed in the same pensive posture, till rouzed by the opening of the door, and the appearance of Mr. Courteney. Henrietta's face was in an instant covered with blushes: the marquis seemed greatly embarrassed. Mr. Courteney shewed some surprize at first; but, recovering himself, he spoke to his pupil with an easy air, and relieved both him and his sister from their confusion, by entering immediately into an indifferent conversation.

The marquis drew a favourable omen from this behaviour: his looks resumed their usual sweetness and vivacity; and, during a whole hour that they continued together, nothing could be more spirited and lively than the discourse between three persons, who had the most perfect tenderness for one another, yet, from their several circumstances, were obliged mutually to oppose and give pain.

The marquis at length, with apparent reluctance, put an end to his visit, as did Mr. Courteney likewise, though he was very desirous of talking to his sister in private. When they were in the chariot together, the young lord was several times upon the point of pressing his governor again upon the subject of his love, as he seemed to be less inclined than formerly to oppose him; but he was restrained from entering into any explanation, by his apprehension of destroying those hopes he had so lately begun to entertain, and of rendering his access to Henrietta more difficult for the future: Mr. Courteney also had his reasons for preventing any such explanation, and industriously amused him with other discourse.

The marquis could not help thinking it strange that he took no notice of the visit he had made his sister: but, as love is ever ready to flatter it's own wishes, he began to imagine that Mr. Courteney had relaxed in the severity of his resolutions, but knew not yet how to yield with a good grace; he favoured his embarrassment therefore for the present, and they passed the remaining part of the day in their usual company and diversions.

When they came home at night, the marquis desired to have an hour's conversation with him; but Mr. Courteney, complaining of a sudden head-ach, excused himself, and retired to his own chamber.

The next morning, before his pupil was up, he repaired to Mrs. Knight's. She told him, that every thing was agreed on for the reception of the young lady; and he had the satisfaction to find his sister making preparations for her removal, without any appearance of discontent. She acquainted him with what had passed in the conversation between the marquis and her.

'I have no doubt of his affection for

'you,'

'you,' said Mr. Courteney; 'we must 'leave the event of it to Providence, and 'act so as that, whatever happens, we 'may not incur censure.'

As soon as breakfast was over, Henrietta, accompanied by Mrs. Knight and her brother, went in a coach to the convent, where she was very civilly received by the superiour. Mr. Courteney promised to visit her soon, and took leave of her, to wait upon Mrs. Knight home; after which he returned to the marquis, who had enquired for him several times.

CHAP. IX.

IN WHICH THE READER, IT IS PRESUMED, CAN MAKE NO DISCOVERIES CONCERNING THE EVENT OF THIS HISTORY.

THE marquis, when he saw him enter his chamber, approached him with an obliging air, and affectionately pressing his hand—

'May I hope, my dear Courteney,' said he, 'that you have overcome your 'fantastick scruples, and that you will 'favour my pretensions to your charming sister? I will make you no apology for stealing a visit to her; you would, I am sure, have done the same in my situation. Indeed, Charles, you must either resolve to give me Miss Courteney, or to see me miserable. She referred me to you; my happiness depends upon a single word of yours; can you be so cruel to refuse me this instance of your friendship?'

'You know, my lord,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'that there is not any thing 'you can desire of me, consistent with 'my honour, which I would refuse; 'but, unless I would make myself infamous, I cannot yield to your marrying my sister without the duke's consent. Hear what I have to propose,' continued he, perceiving him to be in a violent emotion. 'Let us return to England immediately. You have often told me, that the duke is a most tender father; you are an only child; it is possible he may be prevailed upon to yield to your desires, if you tell him you cannot be happy without my sister. Let us make the trial at least.'

'I agree to it,' interrupted the marquis, eagerly, 'provided you will promise me, that if my father is so unreasonable as to refuse his consent, you will no longer oppose my marriage. I am of age; it is fit that, in a matter of such importance to the future happiness of my whole life, I should be at liberty to follow my inclinations. Speak, Charles, will you make me this promise?'

'Indeed, I will not, my lord,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'you must not expect it.'

'Detested obstinacy!' cried the marquis, flinging his hand away, which he had held till this moment; 'what a 'wretch am I to have my happiness depend upon the will of a capricious man, 'who mistakes his romantick whims for 'honour! But observe what I say, 'Courteney,' added he, turning hastily towards him, 'you shall not hinder me 'from visiting your sister; nothing but 'her absolute commands shall prevent 'my seeing her.'

'My sister,' said Mr. Courteney, 'will stay no longer in France, than till 'Mr. Damer, to whose care her mother 'left her at her death, returns from 'Montpelier: he is to conduct her to 'England; and she is gone to board in 'a convent till his arrival.'

'Gone to a convent!' repeated the marquis; 'this is your scheme, I suppose.'

'I hoped to prevail upon you,' said Mr. Courteney, 'since you are quite 'recovered, to leave Paris immediately; 'and I thought a convent the properest 'place for my sister to reside in till her 'guardian comes.'

The marquis instantly running over in his thoughts the use that might be made of this intelligence, replied, that he had no inclination to leave Paris yet; and broke off all farther conversation by quitting the room.

In effect, he had resolved to make an application to Mr. Damer, supposing, that since he had not the same foundation for scruples as his governor, he would readily listen to an offer so advantageous for his ward.

Mr. Courteney penetrated into his views; and doubtful how Mr. Damer would act, and whether his sister, having the sanction of his approbation, might not give way to the motions of her own heart, and encourage the addresses of the marquis; he concluded it necessary to make the duke acquainted with the whole affair, that he might take such measures

measures as he judged proper to restrain his son from an action which would incur his displeasure.

He wrote accordingly that day, and having thus discharged his duty, his mind was more at ease.

The marquis, full of hope that his new scheme would be successful, made no effort to see Henrietta, for fear of raising suspicions in her brother: but the coldness and reserve with which he treated him, sufficiently shewed how much he resented his conduct.

Henrietta was soon reconciled to a retirement, in which she had full liberty to indulge her reflections; for she was in love enough to find more satisfaction in being alone, than in the gayest and most agreeable society. Her brother did not fail to visit her every day: he found her satisfied with her situation; and, in appearance, no otherwise affected with his approaching departure, which he gave her room to expect, than what her tenderness for him might well allow of.

In the mean time the Duke of ——, having received Mr. Courteney's letter, was greatly pleased with the nobleness and generosity of his behaviour. He wrote to him immediately, in terms of the highest friendship and regard; and, acquainting him with the purport of his letter to his son, recommended it to him to hasten his departure, assuring him, he had the firmest reliance upon his integrity and honour.

The packet, to avoid suspicion, had been directed as usual to the marquis, who was not surprized to find a letter in it for Mr. Courteney, to whom his father was accustomed to write often: he sent it to him immediately; and, after reading his own, he went to Mr. Courteney's chamber, holding it still in his hand.

'My father writes to me,' said he, 'to leave Paris as soon as possible. He 'does not expressly say, that he is ill; 'but, from some hints in his letter, I 'can collect that this is the cause of his 'extreme earnestness to see me. You 'cannot imagine how much I am af-'fected with this accident,' pursued he, sighing. 'I love my father: I did not 'know how much I loved him, till I 'feared his loss. I am determined to 'set out to-morrow from Paris; but I 'must see your sister first, Courteney, 'nor ought you to refuse me the satis-'faction of telling her, that I depart 'with a firm resolution never to be but 'hers.'

'Well, my lord,' replied Mr. Courteney, after a little pause, 'we will go 'together, and take leave of my sister.'

'I was to blame,' said the marquis, 'to expect any indulgence from you; 'we will go together, then, since it must 'be so.' He retired again to his own apartment to write to his father; and in the mean time Mr. Courteney gave the necessary orders for their journey the next morning.

Henrietta had been prepared, by a billet from her brother, for the visit that was intended her. The news of their departure had cost her some tears; but when she was informed they waited for her in the parlour of the convent, she appeared before them with all that soft composure and dignity of manners, which never forsook her in the most trying situations.

Mr. Courteney watched the turn of her countenance when the marquis accosted her, and was pleased to see it equally free from embarrassment and affectation; and that, notwithstanding all the expressive language of her lover's eyes, she had so much command over herself, as to seem the least interested person in the company.

Politeness obliged the marquis to shorten his visit, that the brother and sister might be at liberty to take a private leave of each other. He rose from his seat, and approached Henrietta with an air that left her no room to doubt of his intention to say something particular to her; and now, for the first time, her looks betrayed some little confusion.

'I cannot go away, Madam,' said he, 'without renewing the declaration 'I made you some days ago; and I 'take this opportunity to assure you, 'before your brother, who knows the 'sincerity of my heart, that my senti-'ments for you will ever be the same: 'and, if you do not forbid it, I will 'carry away with me the dear hope of 'being able one day to merit your 'esteem.'

Henrietta curtsied in silence; but her blushes, and the soft confusion she was in, seemed no unfavourable omen for the marquis: he bowed respectfully, and retired.

Mr. Courteney, affecting not to perceive his sister's concern, entered, immediately after his pupil's departure, into other

other discourse. He recommended it to her to improve her guardian's esteem for her; and assured her he would visit Lady Meadows, and use his utmost endeavours to remove her prejudices, and restore her to the place she formerly held in her affection. At her desire likewise he promised to call upon Mrs. Willis, to whom she had been so greatly obliged. He charged her to keep up no sort of intimacy with Miss Belmour, though she should seek it; but permitted her, in company with Mr. Damer, to pay her a farewel visit: and, indeed, the conduct of that young lady, since the arrival of Mr. Morley, justified these precautions.

Henrietta promised to follow all his directions. He said a thousand affectionate things to her; and then, desiring to see the superiour, he tenderly recommended his sister to her care; took a short leave, and went home; while Henrietta retired to her chamber to weep.

The marquis was not visible till the next morning, when he was informed that the post-chaise was at the door. His extreme melancholy during the whole journey gave his governor great concern: but he in vain attempted to amuse him; for though the marquis behaved to him with all imaginable respect, yet he was so cold and reserved, that he found it impossible to renew his former freedom with him.

The Duke of —— had informed them, that he should be at his country seat; and, immediately upon their landing in England, they repaired thither. The duke received his son with the most tender transports, and his governor with every mark of esteem and regard.

The morning after their arrival, he sent for Mr. Courteney into his closet, and thanked him in very affectionate terms for having so faithfully and honourably discharged his trust. He politely avoided mentioning the affair of the young lord's passion for his sister, because she was his sister; but said enough to convince him, that he had the most grateful sense of his disinterested conduct upon that occasion. He settled on him, during his life, the sum he had allowed him while he travelled with the marquis; and offered him, in the most cordial manner, all his interest towards procuring him an establishment suitable to his birth.

Mr. Courteney received these instances of the duke's friendship for him with respect and gratitude; but he was more touched with the old nobleman's delicacy with regard to his sister, than with all the favours conferred on himself.

The interest of this sister, whom he loved with the most tender affection, made him hasten his departure from the duke's seat, that he might wait on his aunt, who he had heard was in London. The duke embraced him tenderly at parting, and obliged him to promise that he would return as soon as possible. The marquis lost all his reserve and coldness when he took leave of his governor, his friend, and, what was more than all, the brother of his adored Henrietta.

'You have used me unkindly,' said he in a low voice, yet pressing him tenderly to his breast; 'but I shall always 'love you.'

Mr. Courteney let fall some tears, but made no answer; and immediately after mounting his horse, he set out for London, attended by his own servant, and one of the duke's, whom his grace had ordered to escort him.

CHAP. X.

WHICH LEAVES THE READER STILL IN DOUBT.

MR. Courteney, when he came within a short distance of London, dismissed the duke's servant, with compliments to his grace and the marquis, and proceeded on his journey. It came into his head to alight at the house of Mrs. Willis, from whom it was possible he might receive some intelligence that would be of use to him. The good woman received him with great civility; but, when he told her his name, she was in transports, and enquired for her beloved Miss Courteney with the tender anxiety of a mother.

Mr. Courteney told her, that his sister would soon be in London with her guardian. He took occasion to thank her for her friendly care of her, which Henrietta had mentioned with the utmost gratitude; and assured her, he should always consider himself as highly obliged to her.

'How largely do I share in my dear 'Miss Courteney's joy,' said she, 'for 'so happy a meeting with her beloved 'brother! Heaven will, I doubt not, 'shower it's blessings on her; for sure, 'if

'if ever mortal deserved them, she does. 'O! Sir, your sister is an angelick crea-'ture——'

Mrs. Willis, indulging the tender effusions of her heart, continued to expatiate on Henrietta's virtues, till Mr. Courteney, though not displeased to hear her, interrupted her, to ask some questions concerning his aunt.

'I was going to write to Miss Courteney to-day, Sir,' replied she; 'for 'I have great news to acquaint her with. 'That vile priest, who was the cause of 'all her uneasiness, has at length shewn 'himself in his true colours: the sanctified hypocrite was detected in an 'amour with Lady Meadows's woman. 'This affair has opened her eyes; she 'thinks her niece has been greatly injured by the misrepresentations of this 'wretch, whom she has discarded with 'infamy; and the first proof she has given 'of her favourable disposition towards 'Miss Courteney, was her taking again 'her former woman, whom she had dismissed on account of her attachment to 'the young lady. I had this intelligence 'from Mrs. White herself; for so your 'aunt's woman, Sir, is called. She 'says she does not doubt but her lady 'will write to Miss Courteney in the 'most tender manner, and invite her 'home again.'

This news gave Mr. Courteney great satisfaction: he resolved not to delay a moment visiting his aunt; his portmanteau had been carried into a chamber by Mrs. Willis's directions, and thither he retired to dress. As soon as he was ready, he got into a hackney-coach, and, fraught with a thousand kind wishes from this faithful friend of his sister, he proceeded to the house of Lady Meadows.

He was so lucky as to find her at home, and sent in his name without any hesitation. The old lady, in a violent flutter of spirits, advanced as far as the door of her apartment to meet her nephew. His graceful form and polite address prejudiced her instantly in his favour; and she received him with all the tenderness he could have wished, and with much more than he expected.

Her first enquiries were for Henrietta. Mr. Courteney was pleased with this solicitude; but he observed that, during the course of their conversation, her attention with regard to his sister decreased considerably. He praised her with all the modesty, yet with all the affection of a brother.

Lady Meadows, who had heard a very advantageous account of her niece from the countess, her good friend, assured him that she knew his sister's merit, and had restored her to that tenderness and esteem, which some little errors of hers, and some unjust suspicions of her own, which had been artfully infused into her, had robbed her of. She expressed great satisfaction at hearing of her guardian's kindness: but her words—'I hope he 'will do something for her,' gave Mr. Courteney great concern; who, from the first moment that he had heard Henrietta was likely to recover her favour, had formed a scheme to make her and the marquis happy.

Lady Meadows perceived that he was affected with that expression: she therefore added, that his sister might depend upon a welcome reception from her, whenever she returned to England.

Though there was nothing to object to the words of this declaration, yet there was a great deal to the manner of it. In the coldness with which she made it, he saw the disappointment of his hopes. In reality, Lady Meadows had begun to entertain a prodigious fondness for her nephew; and Henrietta had now but the second place in her affection. The longer she conversed with him, the more this fondness increased. Women are ever readier to discover merit in the other sex than their own. Henrietta had as many amiable qualities as her brother, but Lady Meadows was not so sensible of them: and Mr. Courteney made as great a progress in her affections in three hours, as his sister had done in as many months.

When he rose up to take his leave, she declared with some vehemence, that he must have no other home than her house. 'You have an aunt,' added she, smiling, 'though you have no uncle, nor 'any other relations.' Mr. Courteney reddened with indignation at the mention of his unworthy uncle; but, recovering himself, he made her suitable acknowledgments for her kindness; and, at her desire, immediately dispatched a messenger to Mrs. Willis, to acquaint her that he should not return, and at the same time sent orders to his servant to bring his portmanteau.

Lady Meadows having given direc-

tions for an apartment to be prepared for Mr. Courteney, they passed the evening together with great satisfaction, particularly on the part of the old lady, who thought herself extremely happy in having so accomplished a youth for her nephew. All her thoughts ran upon the pleasure she should have in shewing him to her friends and acquaintance, and of piquing his unnatural uncle, by openly professing her regard for him.

More than a week after his arrival was spent in a continual succession of visits, to all which he attended her; and so absolutely had he won her heart in that time, that she determined on nothing less than the making him her sole heir. Mr. Courteney, who was desirous of improving the favour he was in to his sister's advantage, took all opportunities to revive his aunt's affection for her; so that, to please him, she expressed an impatience to see her. He received letters from her, and from the Duke of ——, the same day. Henrietta informed him, that she had heard from Mr. Damer, and that she expected him in Paris in a few days: that the affairs he had to settle there, would detain him but a short time; after which they were to set out immediately for England. She added, that the marquis had wrote to her, and gave him a brief recapitulation of his letter, which seemed to be dictated by the most ardent affection, and the strictest principles of honour.

The duke's letter contained only an earnest request to see him as soon as possible. Lady Meadows was very unwilling to part with him, though he assured her, he would return in two or three days. He spent part of the night in answering his sister's letter, and set out the next morning in a post-chaise for the duke's seat: he reached it in the evening at supper-time.

He found only the duke and his son at table; in the countenance of the latter, he observed a profound melancholy, which sensibly affected him. The duke received him with great kindness. The marquis spoke little, but seemed pleased to see him. The next morning the duke sent for Mr. Courteney into his closet.

'What shall I do with my son?' said he to him abruptly, as soon as he entered. 'You see the way he is in; he will 'certainly break my heart. I made him 'a very advantageous proposal three 'days ago: he tells me positively his 'heart is engaged; yet he knows I am 'very desirous the match I mentioned 'to him should take place. This is such 'an instance of obstinacy and disobedi-'ence, as I know not how to pardon. 'Little did I imagine that his return, 'which I so passionately wished for, 'would be productive of so much un-'easiness to me.'

The duke paused here, and looked earnestly at Mr. Courteney; who, not knowing what it was he expected from him, or to what aim his words were directed, continued silent, with his eyes fixed on the ground.

'I see you are concerned,' resumed the duke, 'for the trouble this unlucky 'affair gives me.'

'Indeed I am, my lord, most sincerely,' replied Mr. Courteney.

'Then I may depend upon your readi-'ness to assist me in removing it,' said his Grace. 'Hear what I have to propose. 'Your sister, allowing for the warmth 'of an admirer's imagination, appears 'to me, by my son's account of her, to 'have a great deal of merit: such a 'young lady cannot be without preten-'ders to her heart. It would give me 'great pleasure to contribute to her esta-'blishment: if you have a match in view 'for her, let me know if I can forward 'it, either by my purse or my interest. 'I candidly confess to you, that mere 'generosity is not my motive for making 'you this offer: my son's passion is 'strengthened by hope; when your 'sister is married, I may find it less dif-'ficult to prevail upon him to yield me 'the obedience I require, and which I 'have a right to expect. You do not 'answer me, Mr. Courteney,' added his Grace, after a little pause; 'is there any 'thing disagreeable in this proposal?'

'Thus pressed, my lord,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'it becomes me to 'speak with plainness and sincerity.— 'I have no power over my sister's in-'clinations, and no consideration what-'ever should oblige me to hurry her into 'a marriage which her own choice did 'not direct her to. Besides, I am not 'without suspicions, that the merit of 'the marquis has made some impression 'on her heart; and, though she has sa-'crificed it to her honour and duty, yet 'it will for some time, no doubt, render 'her deaf to any offer that could be made 'her. I am very certain, my lord, that 'she will never encourage the addresses

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'of the marquis without your Grace's 'consent; but were she capable of act- 'ing differently from my hopes and ex- 'pectations, my honour is concerned 'to prevent it: and I most solemnly 'assure your Grace, that my sister shall 'never be the wife of the marquis with- 'out your express approbation.'

The duke could not help being pleased with the candour and spirit of this reply. 'We must leave this affair then as we 'found it,' said he: 'I am so well con- 'vinced of your integrity and honour, 'that I rely upon you entirely to prevent 'any consequences that may be disagree- 'able to me.'

The duke that moment perceiving his son crossing the terrace opposite to his window, desired Mr. Courteney to join him. 'You have still great influence 'over the marquis,' said he; 'try what 'your persuasions can do to make him 'alter his behaviour; this obstinacy of 'his both afflicts and offends me.'

Mr. Courteney bowed, and quitted the duke's closet immediately. The marquis, when he saw him coming to- wards him, stopped to wait for him.

'You have been closeted with my 'father,' said he to him, smiling: 'may 'I know the subject of your conver- 'sation?'

'I dare engage your lordship guesses,' replied Mr. Courteney, smiling likewise.

'I believe I do,' said the marquis; 'the duke has been complaining of me 'for my disobedience, has he not?'

'His Grace tells me he has made you 'a proposal, my lord, which you have 'rejected,' answered Mr. Courteney, 'and he is under great concern about 'it.'

'Well, I am sorry for his uneasiness,' interrupted the marquis: 'but there is 'no help for it.'

'Ah, my lord,' said Mr. Courteney, 'have I not cause to be very uneasy also? 'I who know your motive for disob- 'liging the duke, in a point he seems 'to have so much at heart?'

'You are mistaken,' resumed the marquis; 'I should act as I do, though 'I had never seen Miss Courteney. But 'tell me, my dear Charles, have you 'heard from your sister?'

'I have, my lord,' replied he.

'She is well, I hope,' resumed the marquis, sighing.

'She says nothing to the contrary,' answered Mr. Courteney; 'but I find 'your lordship has written to her.'

'Then she mentions me in her letter?' cried the marquis, eagerly: 'I did in- 'deed write to her, but she would not 'favour me with an answer. But, dear 'Charles,' continued he, 'have you not 'Miss Courteney's letter about you? 'let me see that part where I am men- 'tioned. Shew me only my name, 'written by her dear hand, you know 'not what pleasure it will give me to see 'it.'

'Upon my honour I have not her let- 'ter here,' said Mr. Courteney. 'Why, 'why, my lord,' pursued he, in great concern, 'will you indulge this fatal 'passion for my sister? you must by this 'time be convinced that it can produce 'nothing but uneasiness to the duke, 'yourself, to me, and even to her.'

'To her!' repeated the marquis. 'O! Charles, your sister is wrapped up 'in indifference and reserve; she has not 'the least sensibility for what I suffer 'upon her account.'

'You are too generous, my lord,' replied Mr. Courteney, 'to wish my 'sister should encourage any sentiments 'for you but those of respect and esteem. 'It would be presumption in her to hope 'for the duke's approbation of your 'passion; and were she too sensible of it, 'she must be unhappy.'

'It is enough for me to be unhappy,' resumed the marquis, sighing; 'un- 'happy in the avarice of my father, 'to whom I have laid open my whole 'heart. The want of a fortune is all 'the objection he has to Miss Courte- 'ney; for he appeared charmed with her 'character, and her birth he knows. 'Unhappy too, in a rigid friend, who 'sacrifices me to the fantastick notions 'he has formed of honour. O! Charles, 'little did I imagine once that you 'would have contributed all in your 'power to make me miserable.'

'Indeed, my lord,' replied Mr. Cour- teney, 'this reflection is cruel: this very 'moment all my thoughts are employed 'on the means to make you happy.'

'Now you are again my friend,' in- terrupted the marquis, embracing him eagerly: 'will you then at last give me 'your charming sister? All that duty 'can require I have performed: I have

'implored my father's consent; he has 'had the cruelty to refuse it me; and 'this on a motive so sordid, that I 'am justifiable in following my incli-'nations without soliciting him any 'more.'

'You mistake my intentions, my 'lord,' interrupted Mr. Courteney; 'no, never expect that I will consent to 'your marrying my sister without the 'duke's approbation.'

'What then did you mean,' said the marquis, 'by the hopes you gave me 'just now?'

'To prevail, if possible, upon the 'duke to consent to your marriage,' replied Mr. Courteney.

The marquis signed, and cast down his eyes as if hopeless that this expedient would succeed; but would not say any thing to divert him from his purpose: yet he thought it strange that he should undertake a task, which, interested as he was, seemed less proper for him than any other person.

Mr. Courteney guessed his thoughts, but would not explain himself any farther. In reality, what the marquis had said of his father's having no other objection to his choice but the want of a fortune, confirmed him in his design of using the favour he was in with Lady Meadows to the advantage of his sister; and he was not without expectations of prevailing upon her, by the prospect of so honourable a match for her niece, to do as much for her as she had formerly promised, in case she had married the old baronet.

The marquis, who beheld him earnestly, perceived something was labouring in his mind, and he began to entertain hopes of success, though he knew not on what reasonably to found them. 'I cannot,' said Mr. Courteney, observing the tender solicitude with which he gazed on him, 'communicate to you 'the scheme I have formed to reconcile 'the duke to your wishes, for reasons 'which will be obvious enough hereafter. 'Only thus much I will say to satisfy 'you, that I think it is highly probable 'I shall succeed; but there is one condi-'tion which you must yield to, and 'which I tell you plainly is the price I 'set upon my endeavours to serve you in 'this affair.'

'Name it,' interrupted the marquis, eagerly; 'it must be a strange one in-'deed if I do not comply with it.'

'You must give me a solemn promise, 'my lord,' resumed Mr. Courteney, 'not to seek my sister's consent to a 'clandestine marriage, if I should fail 'in my endeavours to procure the duke's 'approbation, and you must make the 'same promise to his Grace likewise.— 'Nay, my lord,' pursued he, observing that he hesitated, 'you risk nothing by 'entering into this engagement, for I 'am bound by oath, as well as by ho-'nour, to prevent my sister from being 'yours upon any terms but the duke's 'express consent; and, depend upon it, 'you will never gain hers but on the 'same condition.'

'Well,' replied the marquis, 'you 'have my promise, and I will make the 'same declaration to my father: it will 'be time enough to tell him, if your 'scheme proves unsuccessful, my fixed 'resolution never to marry at all, if I 'do not marry Miss Courteney.'

Mr. Courteney had already gained so important a point, that he did not think it necessary to combat this resolution at that time. They walked together into the house; and the marquis conceiving that it might be of some advantage to Mr. Courteney's scheme to take an early opportunity of making the promise he required of him, the duke had that satisfaction in his next private conversation with his son, and was charmed with this new instance of Mr. Courteney's integrity.

The marquis, after having long puzzled himself with conjectures about the design Mr Courteney had formed, at length concluded that he had some expectations from the Earl of ——, his uncle, in favour of his sister; and he was so unfortunately circumstanced between his father's avarice and Mr. Courteney's strict principles of honour, that he was reduced to wish earnestly for the success of an expedient, which he would have disdained, if he had been master of his own actions. Mr. Courteney, at parting, which was in a few days, begged him to rely securely upon his friendship, and to be mindful of the promise he had given him, which the young lord again confirmed.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

IN WHICH THE HISTORY DRAWS NEAR TO A CONCLUSION.

MR. Courteney found his short absence had rather endeared him to his aunt, than leſſened the ardour of her fondneſs. Encouraged by her behaviour, he was ſeveral times upon the point of laying open to her the whole affair of his pupil's paſſion for Henrietta, and the difficulties which obſtructed ſo advantageous a match; difficulties which ſhe could ſo eaſily remove: but he hoped a great deal from the preſence of Henrietta, which it was highly probable would revive the old lady's tenderneſs for her; and from the interpoſition of Mr. Damer, who, it was not to be doubted, would enter heartily into the intereſt of his ward, for whom he expreſſed ſo tender an affection.

While he waited in anxious expectation of a letter from his ſiſter, to acquaint him when ſhe was to leave Paris, with her guardian, he was pleaſingly ſurprized with a billet from Mr. Damer himſelf, requeſting him to meet Miſs Courteney and him at the houſe of Mrs. Willis, where they were juſt arrived.

Mr. Courteney, without communicating this news to Lady Meadows, haſtened to ſee his beloved ſiſter. The moment he entered the room, where ſhe was ſitting with her guardian and Mrs. Willis, ſhe flew to receive him with a tranſport of joy. He embraced her tenderly; and Mr. Damer advancing to ſalute him, he in the politeſt manner thanked him for his generous care of Henrietta.

Mr. Damer was extremely pleaſed to hear that ſhe might depend upon an affectionate reception from her aunt. 'And now, my child,' ſaid he, for ſo he tenderly affected to call her, 'ſince I 'have delivered you ſafe into the hands 'of your brother, I will leave you, and 'a day or two hence I will viſit you at 'your aunt's, and ſettle your affairs in 'a manner which I hope will not be diſ-'agreeable to you.'

Henrietta, who, from ſome paſt converſations with him, well knew the kind purport of theſe words, by a grateful look and a reſpectful curtſey, expreſſed her acknowledgment. Mr. Courteney, ſeeing him prepare to leave them, begged he would favour him with a few moments private converſation. Mr. Damer readily conſented; upon which Mrs. Willis ſhewed them into another room, and returned to load her dear Miſs Courteney with a thouſand tender careſſes.

Mean time Mr. Courteney gave the friendly guardian of his ſiſter a brief account of the marquis's paſſion for her, and the conduct he had obſerved in that affair. He added, that he believed it would be eaſy to engage the duke's conſent to his ſon's marriage with Henrietta, provided her aunt would act as generouſly towards her, as ſhe had formerly given her reaſon to expect.

'From ſeveral hints,' ſaid he, 'which 'Lady Meadows has thrown out, and 'from the great kindneſs ſhe expreſſes 'for me, I am apprehenſive that ſhe in-'tends to transfer her bounty from my 'ſiſter to me; but as my circumſtances, 'though not affluent, are eaſy, and as 'I have nothing ſo much at heart as the 'happineſs of my friend and my ſiſter, 'I will moſt chearfully relinquiſh in her 'favour all my expectations from Lady 'Meadows. The proſpect of ſo ad-'vantageous a match will probably have 'ſome weight with her aunt; and the 'mention of it will come with propriety 'from you, Sir, as the guardian of Hen-'rietta. Lady Meadows will then ex-'plain herſelf clearly; and we ſhall 'have an opportunity given us of preſ-'ſing her to remove, by her generoſity, 'the only obſtacle that obſtructs my 'ſiſter's advancement.'

Mr. Damer was prodigiouſly affected with the uncommon nobleneſs of this proceeding. He took the young gentleman's hand, and, giving it an affectionate ſhake, 'I ſhall love and ho-'nour you while I live,' ſaid he, 'for 'this generous propoſal: doubt not of 'my ready concurrence in every mea-'ſure for your ſiſter's advantage. I 'love her as well as if ſhe was my own 'daughter; and the inconveniencies ſhe 'has ſuffered through the folly and im-'prudence of ſome of my family, require 'that I ſhould make her amends, by do-'ing every thing in my power to make 'her happy.

'I will wait upon Lady Meadows,' purſued he, 'to-morrow in the after-'noon, and then we will talk over this 'affair.' Mr. Courteney told him, he would prepare his aunt for the viſit he intended her. After which, Mr. Da-

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mer went away, and he joined his sister and her friend. A coach being ordered, they took leave of Mrs. Willis, whom Henrietta promised to visit again very speedily. Mr. Courteney had some discourse with his sister as they went, concerning the marquis; but carefully avoided mentioning his design to her, lest he should raise hopes which might be unhappily disappointed.

Henrietta was under some perturbation at the thoughts of appearing before her aunt, whose displeasure against her, and unjust suspicions, all recurred to her memory; but the reception the old lady gave her, immediately effaced these impressions: it was perfectly kind and affectionate, without the least mixture of upbraiding or reproach.

'I had a mind to surprize you, Ma-'dam,' said Mr. Courteney, who with infinite pleasure beheld his sister so tenderly embraced by her aunt. Lady Meadows assured him, that he had surprized her very agreeably; and, again embracing Henrietta, told her, that her good friend, the Countess of ——, had been very lavish in her praise, and had acquainted her with several circumstances of her conduct, which raised her highly in her opinion.

'I suppose you will not be very much 'grieved,' added the old lady, smiling, 'to hear that your former lover Lord 'B—— is married to the citizen's 'daughter.'

'No, indeed, Madam,' replied Henrietta; 'they seemed to be formed for 'each other.'

'They are not very happy, I hear,' said Lady Meadows; who, having fallen upon the article of domestick news, related a great number of anecdotes concerning her acquaintance, some of which Henrietta had often heard before. The old lady's fondness for talking at length gave way to her curiosity to hear every thing that had happened to her niece during their separation.

Henrietta gratified it with discretion, suppressing whatever might tend to revive disagreeable remembrances. She was now put into possession of her former apartment, and had an opportunity that night to congratulate her old friend Mrs. White (who assisted her to undress) upon her being reinstated in the favour of her lady.

CHAP. XII.

WHICH CONCLUDES THE HISTORY.

THE next day Mr. Courteney informed Lady Meadows, that Mr. Damer intended to wait on her; and hinted that he had a match to propose for Henrietta, which he hoped she would approve.

Lady Meadows, who had already taken her resolution with regard to both brother and sister, told him, that she was very desirous of seeing her niece settled; and that she was determined never to oppose her inclinations, being convinced that her virtue and prudence were to be entirely depended upon.

Mr. Damer came according to his appointment; and, being soon after left alone with Lady Meadows, he acquainted her with the whole affair between the Marquis of —— and Henrietta, as he had received it from Mr. Courteney; and, observing that the old lady was dazzled with the prospect of her niece becoming a dutchess, added, that the want of a suitable fortune should not hinder the advancement of Henrietta: 'for whatever 'you design for her, Madam,' said he, 'I will double; so great is my re-'gard for her, and admiration of her 'virtues.'

Lady Meadows with reason thought this a very generous proposal. She complimented him upon it; and, stepping to her cabinet, took out a box that contained her will, and another deed which had been drawn up while Mr. Courteney was in the country with the Duke of ——, but were not yet executed. She put these papers into Mr. Damer's hands, and desired him to read them, saying—'You will there see, Sir, what I 'intend to do for my nephew and his 'sister.'

Mr. Damer opened the first, which was the will. He found she had constituted Mr. Courteney her heir, leaving him her whole estate, charging it only with the sum of five thousand pounds, to be paid his sister on the day of her marriage. The other paper contained a settlement of three hundred pounds a year upon Mr. Courteney during her life.

Mr. Damer, who knew the young gentleman's

gentleman's sentiments, proposed to Lady Meadows to send for him, and acquaint him with her intentions. To this she readily agreed. Mr. Courteney turned pale when he heard the moderate sum designed for his sister; and, after expressing his gratitude to Lady Meadows for the favour she shewed him, in terms the most respectful and affectionate, he earnestly conjured her to let Henrietta be at least an equal sharer with him in her kindness. He urged, as a motive to her to comply, the very advantageous match that was proposed to his sister. He expatiated on the marquis's tender and faithful passion for her; and touched with great delicacy upon the sentiments Henrietta could not avoid entertaining for a young nobleman, who had loved her with honour, even when ignorant of her birth, and when she was under very humiliating circumstances.

Lady Meadows interrupted him with the most flattering praises of his disinterestedness; but declared that her resolution was unalterable. 'Your sister 'will have ten thousand pounds,' said she; 'this is no despicable fortune: and 'since there is so much love on the side 'of the marquis, there is no doubt but 'it will be thought sufficient.'

Mr. Damer explained the old lady's meaning, by telling him what he proposed to do for Miss Courteney; and preventing the young gentleman's acknowledgments—'You have sufficiently 'shewn your regard for your sister,' said he, 'and I am of opinion we ought 'not to press Lady Meadows any more 'on this subject; she has acted nobly by 'you both.'

The lady was extremely flattered by the praise Mr. Damer gave her; and, to prevent any more solicitations from her nephew, she signed the papers immediately, which Mr. Damer, at her request witnessed.

Mr. Courteney said every thing that gratitude and politeness could suggest, upon her presenting him the settlement; yet there was an air of concern upon his countenance, which Mr. Damer observing, took an opportunity to desire him, in a whisper, to meet him at a coffee-house (which he named to him) that evening, having something to say to him, which he hoped would make all things easy.

Mr. Courteney promised to attend him. He then begged Lady Meadows not to let Henrietta know what had passed with regard to the marquis. 'At 'present,' said he, 'she considers this 'marriage as impossible to be effected, 'and so I would have her consider it, 'till I am sure that the duke will make 'no objection to the fortune that is de-'signed her.' Lady Meadows approved of his caution; and Mr. Damer was desired to visit her in her own apartment, and acquaint her with the dispositions made by her aunt.

Henrietta expressed the highest satisfaction at what had been done for her beloved brother; and, with the greatest sweetness, acknowledged her obligations to her aunt for the provision she had made for her: but when Mr. Damer acquainted her with the addition he designed to make to the fortune her aunt would give her, tears of tenderness and gratitude overspread her face, and she could utter no more than—'O! Sir, 'how generous—how kind is this—'how shall I repay such unexampled 'goodness!'

Mr. Damer interrupted her soft exclamations, to lead her down stairs to her aunt, to whom she paid her acknowledgments with inimitable grace, and congratulated her brother with so sincere a joy, that he, who knew how much he was likely to lose by his good fortune, was moved almost to tears.

Mr. Damer a short time afterwards took his leave, and went to the coffee-house, where he had appointed Mr. Courteney to meet him. He was soon followed by the young gentleman, whose mind was under great agitations on his sister's account.

'One would hardly imagine,' said Mr. Damer to him, smiling, 'that you 'have just been declared heir to a good 'estate; you look like one disappointed 'and unhappy.'

'I am indeed disappointed, Sir,' replied Mr. Courteney: 'I had laid a 'plan to make my sister and my friend 'happy; but my aunt's partiality has 'broke all my measures for the pre-'sent.'

'Then you intend,' said Mr. Damer, who had taken particular notice of his last words, 'to make some addition to 'your sister's fortune, when the estate 'comes into your hands?'

'Certainly, Sir,' replied Mr. Courteney;

teney; 'I should but ill deserve it, if I 'did not.'

'It must be confessed,' resumed Mr. Damer, 'that you are a very good bro- 'ther.'

'All that I can do for my sister, Sir,' said he, 'will be but bare justice; but 'your generosity to her can never be 'enough admired.'

'No more of that,' interrupted Mr. Damer. 'I love your sister: she is a 'worthy young woman; I am grieved 'to think so noble a match for her 'should meet with any obstruction for 'the want of a fortune. What do you 'think the duke will expect?'

'The lady he has proposed to his son, 'Sir,' said Mr. Courteney, 'has twenty 'thousand pounds; and it would have 'been my pride and happiness to have 'prevailed with my aunt to make my 'sister's fortune equal to that.'

'Is it possible!' cried Mr. Damer, surprized. 'Why, fifteen thousand 'pounds is at least one third of your 'aunt's fortune.'

'My sister,' said Mr. Courteney, 'has a right to expect it. The whole 'would have been hers but for some 'unlucky accidents, and the strange 'partiality of Lady Meadows for me. 'All that I can now do is, to let the 'marquis know, that my sister will have 'ten thousand pounds paid on the day 'of her marriage, and ten thousand more 'on the death of her aunt. The duke 'loves money; and I greatly doubt whe- 'ther all his son's solicitations will make 'him relish this reversionary ten thou- 'sand pounds.'

'We will not put it to the hazard,' interrupted Mr. Damer: 'since you are 'determined to act thus generously by 'your sister, I will lay down the money 'myself, and all the security I require, 'is your bond for the re-payment of it 'when your aunt's estate comes into 'your possession.'

Mr. Courteney was so overwhelmed with surprize, joy, and gratitude, for this unexpected, noble offer, that, during some moments, he was unable to utter a word. But this silence, accompanied with looks the most expressive that can be imagined, was more eloquent than any language could be. Recovering himself at last, he was beginning to pay the warmest acknowledgments; but Mr. Damer would not suffer him to proceed.

'I am impatient,' said he, 'for the 'conclusion of this affair. Write to 'your friend immediately, and let him 'know that your sister's guardian will 'treat with the duke his father when- 'ever he pleases.'

Mr. Courteney, at his reiterated request, took leave of him, and went home, in order to communicate this joyful news to his friend. Hearing that Lady Meadows and his sister were engaged in company, he went to his own apartment, and wrote a short letter to the marquis, in which he acquainted him, that his sister being restored to the favour of her aunt, he had it now in his power to assure him, that if he continued in the same sentiments towards her, and could prevail with his Grace to authorize them by his consent, he was impowered by her aunt and her guardian to declare that her fortune would be twenty thousand pounds.

Having sealed and dispatched this letter to the post, he joined the company below stairs, with looks so full of satisfaction, and a behaviour animated with such extraordinary gaiety, that Lady Meadows was more than ever delighted with him, concluding that the noble provision she had made for him was the source of his joy: but Henrietta, who knew her brother better, and who besides saw something particular in those looks which he from time to time gave her, felt strange flutterings in her gentle bosom; hopes checked as soon as formed; wishes suppressed as they rose. In these perturbations, she passed that night and the three following days.

Mean time the marquis, having received Mr. Courteney's letter, was so surprized at this sudden change in the fortune of Henrietta, that he read it over several times before he could persuade himself what he saw was real. His first emotions were all transport: every obstacle to his marriage was now removed; and he might solicit his father's consent, with a certainty almost of not being denied. Yet a sentiment of delicacy and tenderness made him regret, that it was not in his power to convince Henrietta of the disinterestedness of his love, and for some moments rendered him insensible of his present happiness.

The duke came into his chamber while he was reading the letter the twentieth time, and so intently, that he did not perceive his entrance: when suddenly

suddenly raising his eyes, and seeing his father, who, suspecting that this letter, which he seemed to read with so much emotion, came from his mistress, was looking earnestly on him.

'O! my lord,' cried he, 'there is 'nothing wanting to make me perfectly 'happy, but your consent to my mar- 'riage with Miss Courteney. See, my 'lord, what her brother writes; her 'brother, who till now has so obstinately 'opposed my passion!'

The duke took the letter out of his hands; and, having read it, returned it to him again without speaking a word, and walked to the other end of the room. The marquis, who saw nothing unfavourable in his looks, followed him; and, throwing himself at his feet, conjured him not to oppose his happiness any longer. The duke desired time to consider; but his son would not give over his solicitations, till he had obtained leave of him to visit Miss Courteney, and to declare that his addresses had the sanction of his consent.

The happy marquis gave orders instantly for his post-chaise to be got ready, which his father at first did not oppose; but, after reflecting a little—

'Can you not rein in your impatience 'for a few days?' said he to him: 'I 'intend to be in town next week; I 'shall then have an opportunity of see- 'ing the young lady; and, since you are 'so obstinately bent upon the match, of 'talking to her aunt and her guardian.'

The marquis would not disoblige his father, by making any objections to this little delay, grievous as it was to him; but retired to write to Mr. Courteney, whom he acquainted with the duke's intentions; and, anticipating the tender name of brother, poured out his whole heart in the warmest expressions of love, friendship, joy, and every soft emotion with which he was agitated.

Mr. Courteney having communicated this letter to Mr. Damer, he agreed that it was necessary to make Lady Meadows acquainted with the steps they had taken in the affair. She entered with a good grace into the generous designs of her nephew in favour of his sister.

'If I had done more for her,' said she to him, smiling, 'you would not 'have had an opportunity of doing so 'much.' Mr. Courteney kissed he hand with a tender and respectful air,

'Go,' said she, with a look that shewed she was highly pleased; 'go, 'and tell your sister this good news; 'and tell her also that I am impatient 'to embrace and congratulate her.'

Mr. Courteney willingly obeyed her. He went to Henrietta's apartment; and, seeing her sitting pensive and melancholy, he began to rally her upon her tenderness for the marquis. She bore it with great sweetness, but not without some surprize; for her brother was used to be very delicate and reserved upon that subject. By degrees he assumed a more serious tone; and at length gave her to understand, that the marquis was now permitted by his father to pay his addresses to her.

Henrietta blushed and trembled from the moment her brother began to speak to her in a serious manner. Her emotions increased as he proceeded; yet she laboured to conceal them, till Mr. Courteney, explaining to her what Mr. Damer had done for her, which necessarily included his own generous gift, that innate delicacy, which had forced her joy to be silent, suffered her gratitude to shew itself in the most lively expressions. Lady Meadows came into the room, and gave a seasonable interruption to these tender effusions of her heart, which Mr. Courteney had listened to with a kind of painful pleasure. She embraced her niece, and congratulated her on her happy fortune.

Miss Courteney, who had now reason to expect a visit from the marquis, was not much surprized, a few days afterwards, to see his equipage at the door. After a few moments conversation with Mr. Courteney, he was introduced to Lady Meadows, who received him with great respect. Henrietta blushed a little when he appeared; but recovered herself, and received the tender and respectful compliment he made her with her usual grace.

A great deal of company coming in soon afterwards, he found means to engage her apart for a quarter of an hour. Their conversation was such as might be expected between persons of their sense and politeness, who loved each other with the utmost tenderness, and now for the first time saw themselves at liberty to declare their sentiments. Henrietta did not scruple to own to the man, who had so nobly merited her esteem, that her heart had received a more ten-

der impreſſion for him; and this ſoft acknowledgment compleated her lover's felicity.

Mr. Courteney waited upon the duke the next morning, and had the pleaſure to hear from his own mouth, that he was entirely ſatisfied with his ſon's proceedings. His Grace viſited Lady Meadows the ſame day; and was ſo charmed with Henrietta, that he ſcarce diſcovered leſs impatience than his ſon for the concluſion of the marriage. Every thing being agreed on between the duke and Mr. Damer, with regard to ſettlements, the writings were drawn up with all convenient ſpeed, and a day appointed for the marriage.

Lady Meadows, though a Roman Catholick, allowed the ceremony to be performed at her houſe: after which the new-married pair, with the old lady, the Duke, Mr. Damer, and Mr. Courteney, ſet out for his Grace's country-ſeat.

The charming marchioneſs did not make her firſt publick appearance in town till late in the enſuing winter; when her beauty, her ſufferings, her virtue, and her good fortune, were for a long time the ſubjects of converſation.

Mr. Courteney, happy in the conſcious integrity of his heart, happy in the ardent affection of his ſiſter and the marquis, and the eſteem of all who knew him, was, by the death of Lady Meadows, which happened a few months after his ſiſter's marriage, enabled to diſcharge his obligations to Mr. Damer. His generoſity was not long unrewarded: an opulent heireſs fell deſperately in love with him; ſhe was related to the duke, who intereſted himſelf ſo warmly in the affair, that the marriage was ſoon concluded.

Lord B——, as has been obſerved already, lived very unhappy with his plebeian lady. The ſight of the charming Henrietta renewed his paſſion. Tortured with remorſe, diſappointment, and deſpair, he had recourſe to the bottle, and fell an early ſacrifice to intemperance.

Miſs Woodby, who had always a violent paſſion for a red-coat, liſtened to the ſighs of a young cadet, and married him in a week after their firſt acquaintance. Her excuſe for this precipitancy was, that the *lovely youth* would certainly have ſtabbed himſelf, if ſhe had delayed his happineſs any longer. With part of her fortune he bought a commiſſion, and ſpent the reſt in a few months. After which, he went abroad with his regiment, leaving her, in an obſcure retirement, to bewail his abſence, and ſoothe her love-ſick heart with hopes that he would return more *paſſionate* than ever, and lay all his laurels at her feet.

Miſs Belmour, forſaken by her lover, became a proſelyte to the Roman Catholick religion, and retired to a convent, where the nuns wrought her up to ſuch a degree of enthuſiaſm, that ſhe ſettled her whole fortune upon the community, and took the veil; but ſoon afterwards, repenting of this raſh ſtep, ſhe died of grief, remorſe, and diſappointment.

Mrs. Willis was generouſly rewarded by the marchioneſs for the many kind and faithful ſervices ſhe had received from her: and Mr. Damer, who highly eſteemed her for her behaviour to his beauteous ward, ſettled her huſband in ſuch an advantageous way, that in a few years he made a conſiderable fortune.

The younger Mr. Damer found, in the inceſſant clamours of a jealous wife, a ſufficient puniſhment for his treacherous deſigns on Henrietta; and it was not without great difficulty that he was reſtored to his father's favour.

Every branch of the Courteney family made frequent advances towards a reconciliation with the marchioneſs and her brother: but, generous as they were, they had too juſt a ſenſe of the indignities they had ſuffered from them, to admit of it; and, in this ſteady reſentment, they had, as it uſually happens with ſucceſsful perſons, the world on their ſide.

FINIS.

THE

HISTORY

OF

NOURJAHAD.

BY MRS. SHERIDAN.

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THE

HISTORY

OF

NOURJAHAD.

SCHEMZEDDIN was in his two and twentieth year when he mounted the throne of Perſia. His great wiſdom and extraordinary endowments rendered him the delight of his people, and filled them with expectations of a glorious and happy reign. Amongſt the number of perſons who ſtood candidates for the young ſultan's favour, in the new adminiſtration which was now going to take place, none ſeemed ſo likely to ſucceed as Nourjahad, the ſon of Namarand. This young man was about the age of Schemzeddin, and had been bred up with him from his infancy. To a very engaging perſon was added a ſweetneſs of temper, a livelineſs of fancy, and a certain agreeable manner of addreſs that engaged every one's affections who approached him. The ſultan loved him, and every one looked on Nourjahad as the riſing ſtar of the Perſian court, whom his maſter's partial fondneſs would elevate to the higheſt pinnacle of honour: Schemzeddin, indeed, was deſirous of promoting his favourite: yet, notwithſtanding his attachment to him, he was not blind to his faults; but they appeared to him only ſuch as are almoſt inſeparable from youth and inexperience; and he made no doubt but that Nourjahad, when time had a little more ſubdued his youthful paſſions, and matured his judgment, would be able to fill the place of his firſt miniſter, with abilities equal to any of his predeceſſors. He would not, however, even in his own private thoughts, reſolve on ſo important a ſtep, without firſt conſulting with ſome old lords of his court, who had been the conſtant friends and counſellors of the late ſultan his father. Accordingly, having called them into his cloſet one day, he propoſed the matter to them, and deſired their opinion. But, before they delivered it, he could eaſily diſcover by the countenances of theſe grave and prudent men, that they diſapproved his choice. 'What 'have you to object to Nourjahad?' ſaid the ſultan, finding that they all continued ſilent, looking at each other. 'His youth,' replied the eldeſt of the counſellors. 'That objection,' anſwered Schemzeddin, 'will grow lighter 'every day.'—'His avarice,' cried the ſecond. 'Thou art not juſt,' ſaid the ſultan, 'in charging him with that; he 'has no ſupport but from my bounty, 'nor did he ever yet take advantage of 'that intereſt which he knows he has in 'me, to deſire an increaſe of it.'—'What 'I have charged him with is in his na'ture, notwithſtanding,' replied the old lord. 'What haſt thou to urge?' cried the ſultan, to his third adviſer. 'His 'love of pleaſure,' anſwered he. 'That,' cried

cried Schemzeddin, 'is as groundleſs an 'accuſation as the other; I have known 'him from his childhood, and think 'few men of his years are ſo temperate.' —'Yet would he indulge to exceſs, if 'it were in his power,' replied the old man. The ſultan now addreſſed the fourth—'What fault haſt thou to ob-'ject to him?' cried he. 'His irreli-'gion,' anſwered the ſage. 'Thou art 'even more ſevere,' replied the ſultan, 'than the reſt of thy brethren, and I be-'lieve Nourjahad as good a Muſſulman 'as thyſelf.' He diſmiſſed them coldly from his cloſet; and the four counſellors ſaw how impolitick a thing it was to op-poſe the will of their ſovereign.

Though Schemzeddin ſeemed diſ-pleaſed with the remonſtrances of the old men, they nevertheleſs had ſome weight with him. 'It is the intereſt of Nour-'jahad,' ſaid he, 'to conceal his faults 'from me; the age and experience of 'theſe men doubtleſs has furniſhed them 'with more ſagacity than my youth can 'boaſt of; and he may be in reality what 'they have repreſented him.' This thought diſquieted the ſultan, for he loved Nourjahad as his brother. 'Yet 'who knows,' cried he, 'but it may be 'envy in theſe old men? they may be 'provoked at having a youth raiſed to 'that honour to which each of them per-'haps in his own heart aſpires. We 'can ſometimes form a better judgment 'of a man's real diſpoſition, from an un-'guarded ſally of his own lips, than 'from a cloſe obſervation of years, 'where the perſon, conſcious of being 'obſerved, is watchful and cautious of 'every look and expreſſion that falls 'from him. I will ſound Nourjahad 'when he leaſt ſuſpects that I have any 'ſuch deſign, and from his own mouth 'will I judge him.'

It was not long before the ſultan had an opportunity of executing his purpoſe. Having paſſed the evening with his fa-vourite at a banquet, where they had both indulged pretty freely, he invited Nourjahad to a walk by moon-light in the gardens of the ſeraglio. Schemzeddin leaned on his ſhoulder as they rambled from one delicious ſcene to another; ſcenes rendered ſtill more enchanting by the ſilence of the night, the mild luſtre of the moon now at full, and the exha-lations which aroſe from a thouſand odo-riferous ſhrubs. The ſpirits of Nour-jahad were exhilarated by the mirth and feſtivity in which he had paſſed the day. The ſultan's favour intoxicated him; his thoughts were diſſipated by a variety of agreeable ſenſations, and his whole ſoul as it were rapt in a kind of pleaſing delirium. Such was the frame of Nour-jahad's mind, when the ſultan, with an aſſumed levity, throwing himſelf down on a bank of violets, and familiarly drawing his favourite to ſit by him, ſaid—'Tell me, Nourjahad, and tell me 'truly, what would ſatisfy thy wiſhes, 'if thou wert certain of poſſeſſing what-'ſoever thou ſhouldſt deſire?' Nourjahad remaining ſilent for ſome time, the ſul-tan, ſmiling, repeated his queſtion. 'My-'wiſhes,' anſwered the favourite, 'are 'ſo boundleſs, that it is impoſſible for 'me to tell you directly; but, in two 'words, I ſhould deſire to be poſſeſſed 'of inexhauſtible riches; and, to enable 'me to enjoy them to the utmoſt, to have 'my life prolonged to eternity.'—'Wouldſt thou, then,' ſaid Schemzed-din, 'forego thy hopes of Paradiſe?'—'I would,' anſwered the favourite, 'make a paradiſe of this earthly globe 'while it laſted, and take my chance 'for the other afterwards.'

The ſultan, at hearing theſe words, ſtarted up from his ſeat, and knitting his brow—'Be gone,' ſaid he, ſternly; 'thou art no longer worthy of my love 'or my confidence: I thought to have 'promoted thee to the higheſt honours, 'but ſuch a wretch does not deſerve to 'live. Ambition, though a vice, is yet 'the vice of great minds; but avarice, 'and an inſatiable thirſt for pleaſure, de-'grades a man below the brutes.'

Saying this, he turned his back on Nourjahad, and was about to leave him; when the favourite catching him by the robe, and falling on his knees—'Let 'not my lord's indignation,' ſaid he, 'be kindled againſt his ſlave, for a few 'light words, which fell from him only 'in ſport: I ſwear to thee, my prince, by 'our holy prophet, that what I ſaid is far 'from being the ſentiments of my heart; 'my deſire for wealth extends not farther 'than to be enabled to procure the ſober 'enjoyments of life; and, for length of 'years, let not mine be prolonged a day 'beyond that in which I can be ſervice-'able to my prince and my country.'

'It is not,' replied the ſultan, with a mildneſs chaſtened with gravity, 'it is 'not for mortal eyes to penetrate into 'the cloſe receſſes of the human heart; 'thou

'thou haſt atteſted thy innocence by an 'oath; it is all that can be required 'from man to man: but remember thou 'haſt called our great prophet to wit-'neſs; him thou canſt not deceive, 'though me thou mayeſt.'

Schemzeddin left him without waiting for his reply; and Nourjahad, exceedingly mortified that his unguarded declaration had ſo much leſſened him in his maſter's eſteem, retired to his own houſe, which immediately joined the ſultan's palace.

He paſſed the reſt of the night in traverſing his chamber, being unable to take any reſt. He dreaded the thoughts of loſing the ſultan's favour, on which alone he depended for his future advancement; and tormenting himſelf all night with apprehenſions of his diſgrace, he found himſelf ſo indiſpoſed in the morning, that he was unable to leave his chamber. He ſpent the day in gloomy reflections, without ſuffering any one to come near him, or taking any repaſt: and when night came, wearied with painful thoughts, and want of ſleep, he threw himſelf on his bed. But his ſlumbers were diſturbed by perplexing dreams. What had been the ſubject of his anxiety when awake, ſerved now to imbitter and diſtract his reſt: his fancy repreſented the ſultan to him as he had laſt ſeen him in the garden, his looks ſevere, and his words menacing. 'Go, wretch!' he thought he heard him cry; 'go ſeek thy bread in a remote 'country; thou haſt nothing to expect 'from me but contempt.'

Nourjahad awoke in agonies. 'O 'Heaven!' cried he aloud, 'that I could 'now inherit the ſecret wiſh I was fool 'enough to diſcloſe to thee; how little 'ſhould I regard thy threats!'—'And 'thou ſhalt, O Nourjahad,' replied a voice, 'poſſeſs the utmoſt wiſhes of thy 'ſoul!' Nourjahad ſtarted up in his bed, and rubbed his eyes, doubting whether he was really awake, or whether it was not his troubled imagination which cheated him with this deluſive promiſe; when, behold! to his unutterable aſtoniſhment, he ſaw a refulgent light in his chamber, and at his bed's ſide ſtood a youth of more than mortal beauty. The luſtre of his white robes dazzled his eyes; his long and ſhining hair was encircled with a wreath of flowers that breathed the odours of paradiſe.

Nourjahad gazed at him, but had not power to open his mouth. 'Be not 'afraid,' ſaid the divine youth, with a voice of ineffable ſweetneſs; 'I am thy 'guardian Genius, who have carefully 'watched over thee from thy infancy, 'though never till this hour have I been 'permitted to make myſelf viſible to 'thee. I was preſent at thy converſation in the garden with Schemzeddin; 'I was a witneſs to thy unguarded declaration, but found thee afterwards 'awed by his frowns to retract what 'thou hadſt ſaid: I ſaw, too, the rigour of the ſultan's looks as he departed from thee, and know that they 'proceeded from his doubting thy truth. 'I, though an immortal ſpirit, am not 'omniſcient; to God only are the ſecrets of the heart revealed: ſpeak boldly, then, thou highly favoured of our 'prophet, and know that I have power 'from Mahomet to grant thy requeſt, 'be it what it will. Wouldſt thou be 'reſtored to the favour and confidence 'of thy maſter, and receive from his 'friendſhip and generoſity the reward 'of thy long attachment to him; or doſt 'thou really deſire the accompliſhment 'of that extravagant wiſh, which thou 'didſt, in the openneſs of thy heart, 'avow to him laſt night?'

Nourjahad, a little recovered from his amazement, and encouraged by the condeſcenſion of his celeſtial viſitant, bowed his head low in token of adoration.

'Diſguiſe to thee, O ſon of Para-'diſe!' replied he, 'were vain and 'fruitleſs; if I diſſembled to Schemzed-'din, it was in order to reinſtate myſelf 'in his good opinion, the only means 'in my power to ſecure my future proſpects: from thee I can have no reaſon to conceal my thoughts; and ſince 'the care of my happineſs is conſigned 'to thee, my guardian angel, let me poſſeſs that wiſh, extravagant as it may 'ſeem, which I firſt declared.'

'Raſh mortal!' replied the ſhining viſion, 'reflect once more, before you 'receive the fatal boon; for, once granted, you will wiſh, perhaps, and wiſh 'in vain, to have it recalled.'—'What 'have I to fear,' anſwered Nourjahad, 'poſſeſſed of endleſs riches and of immortality?'—'Your own paſſions,' ſaid the heavenly youth. 'I will ſubmit to all 'the evils ariſing from them,' replied Nourjahad; 'give me but the power of 'gratifying them in their full extent.'—

'Take

'Take thy wish, then,' cried the Genius, with a look of discontent. 'The 'contents of this phial will confer im- 'mortality on thee, and to-morrow's 'sun shall behold thee richer than all the 'kings of the East.' Nourjahad stretched his hands out eagerly to receive a vessel of gold, enriched with precious stones, which the angel took from under his mantle. 'Stop,' cried the aerial being, 'and hear the condition with 'which thou must accept the wondrous 'gift I am now about to bestow. Know, 'then, that your existence here shall 'equal the date of this sublunary globe; 'yet, to enjoy life all that while, is not 'in my power to grant.' Nourjahad was going to interrupt the celestial, to desire him to explain this, when he prevented him, by proceeding thus: 'Your life,' said he, 'will be frequent- 'ly interrupted by the temporary death 'of sleep.'—'Doubtless,' replied Nourjahad, 'nature would languish without 'that sovereign balm.'—'Thou misun- 'derstandest me,' cried the Genius; 'I 'do not mean that ordinary repose 'which nature requires: the sleep thou 'must be subject to, at certain periods, 'will last for months, years, nay for 'a whole revolution of Saturn at a time, 'or perhaps for a century.'—'Fright- 'ful!' cried Nourjahad, with an emotion that made him forget the respect which was due to the presence of his guardian angel. He seemed suspended, while the radiant youth proceeded—'It 'is worth considering; resolve not too 'hastily.'—'If the frame of man,' replied Nourjahad, 'in the usual course of 'things, requires, for the support of 'that short span of life which is allotted 'to him, a constant and regular por- 'tion of sleep, which includes at least 'one third of his existence; my life, 'perhaps, stretched so much beyond it's 'natural date, may require a still greater 'proportion of rest, to preserve my body 'in due health and vigour. If this be 'the case, I submit to the conditions; 'for what is thirty or fifty years out of 'eternity?'—'Thou art mistaken,' replied the Genius; 'and though thy rea- 'soning is not unphilosophical, yet is it 'far from reaching the true cause of 'these mysterious conditions which are 'offered thee: know, that these are con- 'tingencies which depend entirely on 'thyself.'—'Let me beseech you,' said Nourjahad, 'to explain this.'—'If thou 'walkest,' said the Genius, 'in the 'paths of virtue, thy days will be 'crowned with gladness, and the even 'tenor of thy life undisturbed by any 'evil; but if, on the contrary, thou 'perverteth the good which is in thy 'power, and settest thy heart on iniqui- 'ty, thou wilt thus be occasionally pu- 'nished by a total privation of thy fa- 'culties.'—'If this be all,' cried Nourjahad, 'then am I sure I shall never in- 'cur the penalty; for though I mean to 'enjoy all the pleasures that life can be- 'stow, yet am I a stranger to my own 'heart, if it ever lead me to the wilful 'commission of a crime.' The Genius sighed. 'Vouchsafe, then,' proceeded Nourjahad, 'vouchsafe, I conjure you, 'most adorable and benign spirit, to ful- 'fil your promise, and keep me not 'longer in suspence.' Saying this, he again reached forth his hand for the golden vessel, which the Genius no longer witheld from him. 'Hold thy nostrils 'over that phial,' said he, 'and let the 'fumes of the liquor which it contains 'ascend to thy brain.' Nourjahad opened the vessel, out of which a vapour issued, of a most exquisite fragrance; it formed a thick atmosphere about his head, and sent out such volatile and sharp effluvia, as made his eyes smart exceedingly, and he was obliged to shut them while he snuffed up the essence. He remained not long in this situation; for the subtle spirit quickly evaporating, the effects instantly ceased, and he opened his eyes; but the apparition was vanished, and his apartment in total darkness. Had not he still found the phial in his hands, which contained the precious liquor, he would have looked on all this as a dream; but so substantial a proof of the reality of what had happened leaving no room for doubts, he returned thanks to his guardian Genius, whom he concluded, though invisible, to be still within hearing; and putting the golden vessel under his pillow, filled as he was with the most delightful ideas, composed himself to sleep.

The sun was at his meridian height when he awoke next day; and the vision of the preceding night immediately recurring to his memory, he sprung hastily from his bed; but how great was his surprize, how high his transports, at seeing the accomplishment of the Genius's promise! His chamber was surrounded with several large urns of polished

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lished brass, some of which were filled with gold coin of different value and impressions; others with ingots of fine gold; and others with precious stones of prodigious size and lustre.

Amazed, enraptured at the sight, he greedily examined his treasures; and looking into each of the urns, one after the other, in one of them he found a scroll of paper, with these words written on it—

'I have fulfilled my promise to thee, 'O Nourjahad! Thy days are without number, thy riches inexhaustible. 'Yet cannot I exempt thee from the evils 'to which all the sons of Adam are 'subject. I cannot screen thee from 'the machinations of envy, nor the ra'paciousness of power: thy own pru'dence must henceforth be thy guard. 'There is a subterraneous cavern in thy 'garden, where thou mayest conceal 'thy treasure: I have marked the place, 'and thou wilt easily find it. Farewel; 'my charge is at an end.'

'And well hast thou acquitted thyself 'of this charge, most munificent and 'benevolent Genius,' cried Nourjahad; 'ten thousand thanks to thee for this 'last friendly warning. I should be a 'fool indeed, if I had not sagacity 'enough to preserve myself against ra'paciousness or envy: I will prevent the 'effects of the first by concealing thee, 'my precious treasure, thou source of 'all felicity, where no mortal shall dis'cover thee; and, for the other, my 'bounty shall disarm it of it's sting. 'Enjoy thyself, Nourjahad; riot in lux'urious delights, and laugh at Schem'zeddin's impotent resentment.'

He hastened down into his garden, in order to find the cave; of which he was not long in search. In a remote corner stood the ruins of a small temple, which in former days, before the true religion prevailed in Persia, had been dedicated to the worship of the Gentiles. The vestiges of this little building were so curious, that they were suffered to remain, as an ornament, where they stood. It was raised on a mount; and, according to the custom of idolaters, surrounded with shady trees. On a branch of one of these, Nourjahad perceived hanging a scarf of fine white taffety, to which was suspended a large key of burnished steel.

Nourjahad's eager curiosity soon rendered his diligence successful in finding the door to which this belonged; it was within-side the walls of the temple, and under what formerly seemed to have been the altar. He descended by a few steps into a pretty spacious cavern; and, by groping about, for there was scarce any light, he judged it large enough to contain his treasures.

Whether his guardian Genius had contrived it purely for his use, or whether it had been originally made for some other purpose, he did not trouble himself to enquire; but, glad to have found so safe a place in which to deposit his wealth, he returned to his house; and having given orders that no visitors should approach him, he shut himself up in his chamber for the rest of the day, in order to contemplate his own happiness, and, without interruption, to lay down plans of various pleasures and delights for ages to come.

Whilst Nourjahad was rich only in speculation, he really thought that he should be able to keep his word with the Genius; that the employing his wealth to noble and generous purposes would have constituted great part of his happiness; and that, without plunging into guilt, he could have gratified the utmost of his wishes. But he soon found that his heart had deceived him, and that there is a wide difference between the fancied and actual possession of wealth. He was immediately absorbed in selfishness, and thought of nothing but the indulgence of his own appetites. 'My 'temper,' said he, as he lay stretched at length on a sopha, 'does not much 'incline me to take any trouble; I shall 'therefore never aspire at high employ'ments, nor would I be the sultan of 'Persia if I might; for what addition 'would that make to my happiness? 'None at all; it would only disturb my 'breast with cares, from which I am 'now exempt. And which of the real, 'substantial delights of life, could I 'then possess, that are not now within 'my power? I will have a magnificent 'house in town, and others in the coun'try, with delicious parks and gardens. 'What does it signify whether or not 'they are dignified with the names of 'palaces? or whether I am attended by 'princes or slaves? The latter will do

'my business as well, and be more subservient to my will. There are three particulars, indeed, in which I will exceed my master: in the beauties of my seraglio, the delicacies of my table, and the excellence of my musicians. In the former of these especially, King Solomon himself shall be outdone. All parts of the earth shall be explored for women of the most exquisite beauty; art and nature shall combine their utmost efforts to furnish the boundless variety and elegance of my repasts; the sultan's frigid temperance shall not be a pattern to me. Then no fear of surfeits; I may riot to excess, and bid defiance to death.' Here he started, on recollection that he had not requested the Genius to secure him against the attacks of pain or sickness. 'I shall not, however, be impaired by age,' said he, 'and this too, perhaps, is included in his gift. But no matter; since I cannot die, a little temporary pain will make me the more relish my returning health. Then,' added he, 'I will enjoy the charms of musick in it's utmost perfection: I will have the universe searched for performers of both sexes; whose exquisite skill, both in instrumental and vocal harmony, shall ravish all hearts. I shall see the line of my posterity past numeration, and all the while enjoy a constant succession of new delights. What more is there wanting to consummate happiness? and who would ever wish to change such an existence for one of which we are entirely ignorant?' Here he paused. 'But are there not,' proceeded he, 'some things called intellectual pleasures; such as Schemzeddin used to talk of to me, and for which, when I was poor, I fancied I had a sort of relish? They may have their charms, and we will not leave them quite out of our plan. I will certainly do abundance of good; besides, I will retain in my family half a score of wise and learned men, to entertain my leisure hours with their discourse: then, when I am weary of living in this country, I will set out, with some chosen companions, to make a tour through the whole earth. There shall not be a spot of the habitable world, which contains any thing worthy of my curiosity, that I will not visit; residing longest in those places which I like best: and, by this means, I may pass through two or three centuries, even before I have exhausted the variety of my prospects; after that, I must content myself with such local enjoyments as may fall in my way.'

With such thoughts as these he entertained himself, waiting for the hour when his slaves should be retired to rest, as he had resolved to take that opportunity of burying his treasure.

He had tried the weight of the urns, one by one: those which contained the gold he found so extremely heavy, that it was impossible for him to lift them; those which held the jewels, he could easily carry. Accordingly, when every one in his house was asleep, he loaded himself with his pleasing burdens; and having, from each of the repositories which held the gold, filled several large purses for his immediate expences, he conveyed the rest, by many journies to and from the cave, all safe to his subterranean treasury; where having locked them up securely, he retired to his apartment, and went to bed.

For the three succeeding days his thoughts were so perplexed and divided, that he knew not which of his favourite schemes he should first enter upon. Satisfied with having the means in his power, he neglected those ends for which he was so desirous of them. 'Shall I,' said he, 'purchase, or set about building for myself a magnificent palace? Shall I dispatch emissaries in search of the most beautiful virgins that can be obtained? and others, at the same time, to procure for me the rarest musicians? My household, meanwhile, may be established, and put on a footing suitable to the grandeur in which I purpose to live. I will directly hire a number of domesticks; among which shall be a dozen of the best cooks in Persia, that my table at least may be immediately better supplied than that of the sultan. I am bewildered with such a multiplicity of business; and must find out some person who, without giving me any trouble, will undertake to regulate the œconomy of all my domestick concerns.'

In these thoughts he was so immersed, that he entirely forgot to pay his court to Schemzeddin; and, without any other enjoyment of his riches than the pleasure of thinking of them, he sat for whole days

days alone, alternately improving on, or rejecting, such ſyſtems of happineſs as aroſe in his mind.

The ſultan, mean time, offended at his abſenting himſelf, without offering any excuſe for it, eſpecially as their laſt parting had been a cold one, was ſo diſguſted at his behaviour, that he ſent one of his officers to forbid him his preſence, and charge him never more to appear at court. 'Tell him, however,' ſaid he, 'that I have not ſo far forgot my former 'friendſhip for him, as to ſee him want 'a decent ſupport: that houſe, there-'fore, in which he now lives, I freely 'beſtow on him; and ſhall, moreover, 'allow him a penſion of a thouſand 'crowns yearly. Bid him remember, 'that this is ſufficient to ſupply him 'with all the ſober enjoyments of life.' Theſe being his favourite's own words, the ſultan thought proper to remind him of them.

Nourjahad received this meſſage with the utmoſt indifference, but without daring to ſhew any mark of diſreſpect. 'Tell my lord the ſultan,' ſaid he, 'that 'I would not have been thus long with-'out proſtrating myſelf at his feet; but 'that I was haſtily ſent for to viſit a 'kinſman, whoſe dwelling was ſome 'leagues from Ormuz; and who, in his 'laſt hours, was deſirous of ſeeing me. 'He died very rich, and has made me 'his heir. The thouſand crowns a 'year, therefore, my royal maſter may 'pleaſe to beſtow on ſome one who wants 'them more, and is more deſerving of 'his bounty, than I. Wretch that I 'am, to have forfeited my prince's fa-'vour! The houſe that his goodneſs 'beſtows on me, with all gratitude I 'thankfully accept, as it will daily re-'mind me that Schemzeddin does not 'utterly deteſt his ſlave.' Saying this, he preſented the officer with a handſome diamond, which he took from his finger, and begged him to accept of it as a token of his reſpect for him, and ſubmiſſion to the ſultan's pleaſure.

Though Nourjahad had given ſuch a turn to his acceptance of the houſe, his true reaſon was, that having his treaſure buried in the garden, he thought he could not, without great difficulty, and the hazard of a diſcovery, remove it. Thus had he already, in two inſtances, been obliged to depart from truth, in conſequence of his ill-judged and pernicious choice.

The houſe which the ſultan had given him was handſome and commodious; and he thought, by enlarging and furniſhing it magnificently, it would ſufficiently anſwer the purpoſe of his town reſidence; beſides, as it was a royal grant, he was ſure of remaining unmoleſted in the poſſeſſion of it.

He now bent his thoughts on nothing but in giving a looſe to his appetites, and indulging without controul in every delight which his paſſions or imagination could ſuggeſt to him. As he was not of an active temper, he put the conduct of his pleaſures into the hands of one whom he had lately received into his ſervice. This man, whoſe name was Haſem, he found had good ſenſe, and a quickneſs of parts, which he thought qualified him for the truſt he repoſed in him. To him he committed the care of regulating his family, and appointed him the director of his houſhold. In ſhort, under Haſem's inſpection, who on this occaſion diſplayed an admirable taſte, his houſe was ſoon furniſhed with every thing that could charm the ſenſes, or captivate the fancy. Coſtly furniture, magnificent habits, ſumptuous equipages, and a grand retinue, fully gratified his vanity. By Haſem's diligence, his ſeraglio was ſoon adorned with a number of the moſt beautiful female ſlaves, of almoſt every nation, whom he purchaſed at a vaſt expence; by Haſem's care, his board was repleniſhed with the moſt delicious products of every climate; by Haſem's management, he had a choſen band of the moſt ſkilful muſicians of the age; and, by Haſem's judgment and addreſs, he had retained in his houſe ſome of the moſt learned and ingenious men of all Perſia, ſkilled in every art and ſcience. Theſe were received into his family for the inſtruction and entertainment of his hours of reflection, if he ſhould chance to be viſited with any ſuch.

Behold him now arrived at the height of human felicity; for, to render his happineſs incapable of addition, he had diſtinguiſhed, among the beauties of his ſeraglio, a young maid, ſo exquiſitely charming and accompliſhed, that he gave her the entire poſſeſſion of his heart; and, preferring her to the reſt of his women, paſſed whole days in her apartment. By Mandana he found himſelf equally beloved; a felicity very rare among Eaſtern huſbands; and, longing

to unboſom himſelf to one on whoſe tenderneſs and fidelity he could rely, to her he diſcloſed the marvellous ſtory of his deſtiny. His mind, thus diſburthened of this important ſecret, which he had often longed to divulge, but could find none whom he dared to truſt with the diſcovery, he had not one anxious thought remaining: he gave himſelf up to pleaſures; he threw off all reſtraint; he plunged at once into a tide of luxurious enjoyments; he forgot his duty towards God, and neglected all the laws of his prophet. He grew lazy and effeminate; and had not his pride now and then urged him to diſplay to the wondering eyes of the publick the magnificence of his ſtate, he would ſeldom have been inclined to go out of his houſe.

Thus poſſeſſed of every thing that his ſoul could wiſh, he continued, for the ſpace of three moons, without any interruption, to wallow in voluptuouſneſs: when one morning, juſt as he was preparing to ſet out for a beautiful villa, which Haſem had recommended to him for his rural retirement, and which he purpoſed to buy if it anſwered his deſcription, he was prevented by a meſſenger from the ſultan. It was the ſame perſon who once before had been ſent to him, to forbid him the court. 'I am 'ſorry, my lord,' ſaid he, on entering Nourjahad's apartment, 'to be a ſecond 'time the bearer of unwelcome tidings; 'but Schemzeddin, hearing of the extraordinary grandeur and magnificence 'in which you live, a magnificence indeed equal to that of the ſultan himſelf, would needs know whence you 'derive your wealth, which ſeems ſo 'much to ſurpaſs that of any of his ſubjects; and has commanded me to conduct you to his preſence, in order to 'give an account of it.'

Nourjahad was exceedingly ſtartled at this unexpected ſummons; but it was in vain to diſpute the ſultan's orders; and he was forced, though with great reluctance, to accompany the officer to the palace of Schemzeddin.

He entered it trembling, fearful to declare a falſhood to his ſovereign, yet ſtill more unwilling to confeſs the truth.

In this ſuſpence the officer left him, to acquaint the ſultan of his arrival. He waited not long before he was admitted to the royal preſence.

'Whence is it, Nourjahad,' ſaid the ſultan, 'that thy imprudence hath 'drawn on thee the attention of my 'whole empire; inſomuch, that the re'preſentations made to me of thy pomp 'and luxury now renders it neceſſary to 'enquire into thy riches? They ſeem 'indeed to be immenſe: who was that 'relation that bequeathed them to thee; 'and wherein do they conſiſt?'

Though Nourjahad had endeavoured to prepare himſelf with proper anſwers to all thoſe queſtions which he naturally expected would be aſked on the occaſion, he was nevertheleſs confounded; he could not utter the lyes he had framed with the unabaſhed look of ſincerity; his ſpeech faltered, and his colour changed. Schemzeddin ſaw his confuſion. 'I perceive,' ſaid he, 'there 'is ſome myſtery in this affair which 'thou haſt no mind to diſcover. I 'pray Heaven that thou haſt uſed no 'ſiniſter means to come at the great 'wealth which I am told thou poſſeſſeſt! 'Confeſs the truth; and beware of pre'varicating with thy prince.'

Nourjahad, frightened at the difficulties he found himſelf involved in, fell at the ſultan's feet. 'If my lord,' ſaid he, 'will give me a patient hearing, and 'forgive the preſumption of his ſervant, 'I will unfold ſuch wonders as will 'amaze him, and at the ſame time utter 'nothing but the ſtricteſt truth.' The ſultan turned coldly towards him; but, by ſeeming to attend to his explanation, encouraged him to proceed.

He then gave a faithful relation of the viſion he had ſeen, with all the conſequences of that miraculous event. Schemzeddin ſuffered him to conclude his narration without interruption; but, inſtead of ſhewing any marks of ſurprize, or appearing to credit what he ſaid, looking at him with the utmoſt indignation—'Audacious wretch,' cried he, 'how 'dareſt thou preſume thus to abuſe my 'patience, and affront my underſtanding 'with the relation of ſo ridiculous a for'gery? Go, tell thy incredible tales to 'fools and children, but dare not to inſult thy ſovereign with ſuch outrageous 'falſhoods.'

Though Nourjahad was terrified at the ſultan's anger, he nevertheleſs perſiſted in his declaration, confirming all he had ſaid by the moſt ſolemn oaths. The ſultan commanded him to be ſilent.

'Thou

'Thou art mad,' said he; 'I perceive 'now that the riches thou hast acquired, 'let the means be what they may, have 'turned thy brain; and I am now more 'than ever convinced of the sordidness 'of thy mind, when the unexpected ac-'quisition of a little wealth could thus 'pervert thy judgment, and teach thee 'to impose on thy master for truth, the 'monstrous chimeras of thy wild fancy. 'Thy folly be on thy head; for a lit-'tle, a very little time must, with the 'unbounded extravagance of which 'thou art guilty, dissipate what thy 'friend hath left thee; and when thou 'art again reduced to thy former state, 'thou wilt be glad to sue to my bounty 'for that which thou didst lately with 'so much arrogance reject. Go, un-'happy Nourjahad,' continued he, his voice a little softened, 'the remembrance 'of what thou once wert to me, will 'not permit me to see thee fall a victim 'to thy own desperate folly. Should it 'be publickly known that thou hast thus 'endeavoured by lyes and profanation to 'abuse the credulity of thy prince, thou 'wouldst find that thy boasted immor-'tality would not be proof against that 'death, which he should think himself 'obliged, in justice to his own honour 'and dignity, to inflict on so bold an 'impostor. Hence, miserable man,' pursued he, 'retire to thy house; and, 'if thou art not quite abandoned, en-'deavour, by a sober and regular con-'duct, to expiate thy offences against 'Heaven and thy sovereign; but, as a 'punishment for thy crime, presume not, 'without my leave, to stir beyond the 'limits of thy own habitation, on pain 'of a more rigorous and lasting con-'finement.'

Nourjahad, thunderstruck at this unexpected sentence, was unable to reply; and the sultan having ordered the captain of his guards to be called, committed his prisoner to his hands; telling him, if he suffered Nourjahad to escape, his head should answer it.

Filled with resentment and discontent, Nourjahad was conducted back to his own house; at all the avenues of which he had the mortification to see guards posted, agreeably to the charge given by the sultan.

He retired pensively to his closet, where, shutting himself up, he now for the first time repented of his indiscretion in the choice he had made.

'Unfortunate that I am!' cried he, 'what will riches or length of days 'avail me, if I am thus to be miserably 'immured within the walls of my own 'dwelling? Would it not have been 'better for me to have requested the 'Genius to restore me to the favour of 'my prince? Schemzeddin always loved 'me, and would not fail to have pro-'moted me to wealth and honours; mean 'while, I should have enjoyed my li-'berty, which now, methinks, as I am 'debarred of it, appears to me a greater 'blessing than any I possess. Unhappy 'Nourjahad! what is become of all thy 'schemes of felicity!' He was even weak enough to shed tears, and gave himself up to vexation for the remainder of the day.

His mind, however, was by pleasure rendered too volatile to suffer any thing to make a lasting impression on him; and he had still too many resources of happiness in his power, to give himself up to despair. 'It is true,' said he, 'I 'am debarred of my liberty, but have I 'not still a thousand delights in my pos-'session? The incredulous sultan, sa-'tisfied with punishing me, will give 'himself no farther concern about me, 'provided I do not attempt to escape; 'and, thus withdrawn from the publick 'eye, envy will not endeavour to pene-'trate into the recesses of a private dwel-'ling. I will secure the fidelity of my 'servants by my liberality towards them. 'Schemzeddin's resentment will not last; 'or, if it should, even as long as he 'lives, what is his life, the scanty por-'tion of years allotted to common men, 'to my promised immortality?'

Having thus reconciled his thoughts to his present situation, he resolved, in order to make himself amends for the restraint on his person, to indulge himself with an unbounded freedom in his most voluptuous wishes. He commanded a banquet to be prepared for him that night, which exceeded, in luxury and profusion, any of the preceding. He ordered all his women, of which he had a great number, adorned with jewels, and dressed in their richest habits, to attend on him while he was at supper, permitting none but Mandana the favour to sit down with him. The magnificence of his apartments were heightened by a splendid illumination of a thousand torches, composed of odoriferous gums, which cast a blaze of light that vied with the glories of the

the sun. His musicians, both vocal and instrumental, were ordered to exert the utmost stretch of their art, and to soothe his mind with all the enchanting powers of harmony. Himself, attired in robes such as the kings of Persia were used to wear, was seated under a canopy of silver tissue, which he had put up for the purpose; and, assuming the pomp of an Eastern monarch, suffered the illusion to take such possession of his mind, that, if he were not before mad, he now seemed to be very near distraction.

Intoxicated with pleasure, the historian who writes his life affirms, that this night Nourjahad, for the first time, got drunk.

Be that as it may, it is certain that, having retired to rest, he slept sounder and longer than usual; for, on his awaking, and missing Mandana from his side, whom he had made the partner of his bed, he called out to the slave who always attended in his anti-chamber, in order to enquire for her, resolving to chide her tenderly for leaving him.

He called loud and often; but nobody answering him, as he was naturally cholerick, he jumped out of bed, and stepping hastily into the outer chamber, he found that none of the slaves were in waiting. Enraged at this neglect, he called several of his domesticks by their names, one after another; when at length, after he was almost out of breath with passion, a female slave appeared, who was one of those appointed to wait on Mandana.

The damsel no sooner perceived him, than giving a loud shriek, she was about to run away; when Nourjahad, provoked at her behaviour, catching her roughly by the arm—'Where is thy mistress?' said he; 'and whence arises that terror 'and amazement in thy countenance?'—'Alas! my lord,' answered the slave, 'pardon my surprize, which is occasioned by my seeing you so unexpectedly.' Nourjahad now perceiving that in his hurry he had forgot to put on his cloaths, concluded that it was that circumstance which had alarmed the damsel; and turning from her—'Foolish woman,' said he, 'go tell Mandana that I desire to 'see her.'—'Ah, my lord,' replied the maid, 'I would she were in a condition 'to come to you.'—'Why, what is the 'matter?' said Nourjahad; 'no ill, I 'hope, has befallen the dear light of 'my life? Is she sick? Methinks she 'went to bed last night in perfect 'health.'—'Last night! my lord,' replied the slave, and shook her head. 'Trifler,' cried Nourjahad, 'what 'means that motion? Where is thy mistress? Speak!'—'She is, I hope,' said the slave, 'gone to receive the reward of 'her goodness!' Here she began to weep. 'O Heaven!' cried Nourjahad, 'is my 'dear Mandana dead?'—'She is,' answered the damsel, redoubling her tears, 'and I shall never have so kind a mistress.'

'Alas!' replied Nourjahad, 'by 'what fatal accident am I thus suddenly 'deprived of the adorable creature?'

'It was not suddenly, my lord,' replied the slave; 'Mandana died in child-'bed.'—'Ah, traitress!' cried Nourjahad, 'how dareſt thou thus mock the 'sorrow of thy master, and traduce the 'chastity of my beloved! Thou know-'est it is not more than three moons 'since I received her a virgin to my 'arms; and dost thou presume to im-'pose so ridiculous a story on me as that 'of her having died in childbed?'—'My 'lord,' answered the slave, 'it is more 'than three years since Mandana died.'—'Audacious wretch!' cried Nourjahad, 'wouldst thou persuade me out of 'my senses?' With this he pinched the slave so hard by the arm, that she screamed out.

The noise she made brought several of the servants into the room; who, on seeing Nourjahad, all shewed manifest tokens of fear and surprize. 'What is the rea-'son of all this?' cried he out in a rage; 'are ye all leagued in combination against 'me? Be quick, and explain to me the 'cause of this distraction which appears 'amongst you.'

Hasem, who had run in among the other domesticks, took upon him to answer for the rest. 'It is not to be won-'dered at, my lord,' said he, 'that your 'slaves seem surprized at seeing you thus 'as it were raised from the dead; but if 'they are amazed, their joy, doubtless, 'is equal to their wonder: mine, I am 'sure, is unutterable, to behold my lord 'once more restored to his faithful ser-'vants, after we had almost despaired 'of your ever more unclosing your eyes.'

'You talk strangely,' said Nourjahad, a little staggered at what he saw and heard. He just then recollected the terms on which he had received the important gift from the Genius; and began to suspect

ſpect that he had endured one of thoſe preternatural ſlumbers to which he had ſubjected himſelf. 'How long may I 'have ſlept?' ſaid he. 'Four years and 'twenty days exactly,' anſwered Haſem; 'I have reaſon to know, for I counted 'the melancholy hours as they paſſed, 'and ſeldom quitted your bed-ſide.'— 'It may be ſo,' ſaid Nourjahad; 'I 'have been ſubject to theſe trances from 'a boy, but this has laſted rather longer 'than uſual.' He then commanded all his ſlaves to withdraw, retaining only Haſem, with whom he wanted to have ſome diſcourſe.

'Tell me now,' ſaid he, when they were alone, 'and tell me truly, is all I 'have heard real? and is Mandana ac-'tually dead?'—'Too true, my lord,' replied Haſem: 'Mandana died in child-'bed; and, dying, left her infant ſon to 'my care.'—'Is my child alive?' ſaid Nourjahad eagerly. ''He is, my lord,' anſwered Haſem, 'and you ſhall ſee him 'preſently. Mandana called me to her,' continued he, 'when ſhe found herſelf 'dying—

"Haſem," ſaid ſhe, "be careful of "your lord; Heaven will one day re-"ſtore him to you again. See that you "manage his houſhold with the ſame "prudence and regularity that you "would if he himſelf were to inſpect "into your conduct; for be aſſured he "will ſooner or later exact a juſt account "of your proceedings. Here are the "keys of his coffers: I ventured to take "them from under his pillow, where I "knew he kept them. I have huſ-"banded his fortune with œconomy, "and have hitherto kept order and har-"mony in his family: on you it reſts "to preſerve it in the ſame condition. "Nourjahad will not fail to reward your "diligence and fidelity. It is not ex-"pedient that any one ſhould know the "condition to which he is reduced. "His life is governed by a ſtrange fa-"tality. You have nothing to do, "therefore, but to give out that he is "ſeized with a lingering diſtemper, "which confines him to his bed. Let "no impertinent enquirers ſee him, and "all curioſity about him will ſoon ceaſe."

'Theſe,' proceeded Haſem, 'were almoſt 'the laſt words that my beloved miſtreſs 'ſpoke. I have punctually complied 'with her orders. Your condition has 'been kept a profound ſecret from every 'one but your own family, and they all 'love you too well to betray their truſt. 'Your women are all immured within 'the ſacred walls of your ſeraglio; and, 'though they murmur at their ſituation, 'they fail not to offer up their daily 'prayers that Heaven would reſtore you 'to them. I will now,' continued he, 'preſent your ſon to you; it will be ſome 'conſolation to you to ſee that charm-'ing pledge of Mandana's love.' Saying this, he withdrew; but ſoon returned, leading in the child, who was as beautiful as a little cherub.

Nourjahad melted into tears at the ſight of him, and renewed his complaints for the loſs of his adored Mandana. He ſaw that the child's age ſeemed to agree exactly with the account he had received; and now, fully convinced of the truth of his misfortune, 'O Heaven!' cried he, claſping the young boy to his boſom, 'what would I give that my dear Man-'dana were now here to partake of the 'pleaſure I feel in this infant's careſſes! 'Gladly would I conſent to have three 'ages cut off from the number of my 'years, to have her more precious life 'reſtored. But my felicity would then 'be too great, and I muſt ſubmit to the 'deſtiny which I myſelf have choſen.— 'Prudent Haſem,' ſaid he, obſerving he looked ſurprized, 'thou doſt wonder at 'the words which thou haſt heard me 'ſpeak, but I will not conceal from thee 'the marvellous ſtory of my life. Thy 'fidelity and zeal deſerve this confidence; 'beſides, it is requiſite that I ſhould truſt 'ſome diſcreet perſon with my import-'ant ſecret, ſince Mandana, on whoſe 'tenderneſs and loyalty I could depend, 'is no more.'

Nourjahad then acquainted Haſem with the wonderful myſtery of his life. He did not, however, divulge the circumſtance of his concealed treaſure; he judged from his own heart, that it would not be altogether advileable to lay ſuch a tempting bait in the way even of the moſt virtuous and ſteady mind; but contented himſelf with telling him that his Genius conſtantly ſupplied him with riches, as his occaſions required. Haſem liſtened to him with aſtoniſhment; but aſſured him, after what had already paſſed, he doubted not a tittle of the truth of what he had been told, amazing and almoſt incredible as it appeared.

'My lord,' ſaid he, 'you may ſe-'curely rely on my zeal and diligence, 'ſo long as you are pleaſed to entertain

me'

'me in your service.'—'That I shall 'do during your life,' interrupted Nourjahad. 'But,' replied Hasem, 'what 'if one of those unmerciful long trances 'should continue for a length of time 'much beyond that from which you are 'but now awakened, and that I should 'happen to die before you recover your 'senses; who knows, in that case, what 'might be the consequences?'—'It is 'an accident exceedingly to be dreaded,' replied Nourjahad; 'Heaven knows to 'what indignities I might be exposed, 'perhaps to be buried alive, and con'demned to pass a century or two in a 'dismal sepulchre. The thought makes 'me shudder, and I almost repent of 'having accepted life on such condi'tions. As I have no warning,' continued he, 'when those fatal slumbers 'will overpower me, (for who can al'ways be guarded against the starts of 'passion, or what man is so attentive to 'that impertinent monitor within, as to 'hear his whispers amidst the hurry of 'tumultuous pleasures?) As I know 'not, I say, when I am to be condemned 'to that state of insensibility, or how 'long I shall continue in it, I can only 'conjure thee, if I should happen to be 'seized with another trance during thy 'life, which, considering my disposition, 'is not impossible, that thou wilt ob'serve the same conduct which thou hast 'lately done; and, if the angel of death 'should summon thee away before my 'senses are loosed from their mysterious 'bands, that thou wilt with thy dying 'breath commit the secret to some one 'faithful person of my family, whom 'thou thinkest most fit to be relied on 'for a punctual discharge of their duty. 'As I shall never part with any of my 'servants till the inevitable stroke of 'death separates them from me, and 'shall constantly supply their places 'with the worthiest persons that can be 'found, I think I cannot fail of a suc'cession of people, from amongst whom, 'one at least may always be found, in 'whose secrecy and truth I may safely 'confide.'

'Without doubt, my lord,' answered Hasem, 'you may, by such wise mea'sures as these, be always guarded 'against the worst that may befal you.'

Though Nourjahad had, by thus providing against evil events, exceedingly relieved his mind from the fears by which it was agitated, lest any ill should happen to him during his slumbers; yet was his heart far from being at ease. The loss of Mandana preyed upon his spirits. He had no relish for the charms of his other women; Mandana's superior lovelineſs was always present to his eyes. The delicacies of his table grew tasteless; Mandana's sprightly wit was wanting to give a relish to the feast. The melodious concerts of musick, with which he was wont to be so delighted, now only served to overwhelm him with melancholy: Mandana's enchanting voice was not heard, which used to swell his heart to rapture.

In short, for a time, he took pleasure in nothing but the caresses and innocent prattle of his little son, whom, by his tenderness and endearments, he had taught to love him.

'I am unhappy, my dear Hasem,' would he often say: 'the loss of Man'dana imbitters all my joys; and, me'thinks, I begin to look forward with 'disgust.'

'My lord,' said Hasem, 'there is 'nothing which has befallen you but 'what is common to all. Every one 'may naturally expect to see the death 'of some person or other whom they 'love; but you, who are endowed with 'so miraculous a life, must needs look 'to drop a tear over a thousand graves.'

'Melancholy reflection!' said Nourjahad; 'it occurred not to me in this 'light when I made my choice. I knew 'indeed I must of necessity bury hun'dreds of succeeding generations: 'but,' said I to myself, 'I shall insensibly con'tract new amities, as I perceive the 'old ones are likely to be dissolved by 'the hand of time. My heart,' said I, 'shall never feel a vacuity, for want of 'fit objects of desire. A new beauty 'will naturally take place of her whose 'charms begin to decline: thus the ar'dours of love will be supplied with 'perpetual fuel; and upon the same 'principle will the social joys of friend'ship be unremitting. I considered the 'world as a flower-garden, the product 'of which was to delight my senses for 'a certain season. The bloom is not 'made to last,' thought I, 'but it will 'be succeeded by a fresh blow, whose 'sweetness and variety will equal the 'former, and entirely obliterate them 'from my memory. I thought not,

'alas!

'alas! that, before the spring ended, a 'cruel blast might suddenly destroy my 'fairest flower.'

'Would you, my lord,' said Hasem, 'if it were in your power, absolve your 'Genius from his promise, seeing your 'life must be perpetually subject to such 'misfortunes?'

'Not so neither,' answered Nourjahad; 'time is a never-failing remedy 'for grief: I shall get over this, and be 'better prepared against the next assault 'of evil.'

In effect, Nourjahad kept his word, and soon returned to his former way of living.

He had the mortification, however, to find himself still a prisoner. Hasem told him that the sultan had not yet taken off the restraint under which he had formerly laid him; and, whether it was through forgetfulness or design, the guards still maintained their posts about his house. This Nourjahad was himself convinced of, by seeing them from his windows.

'It is strange,' said he, 'that Schem-'zeddin should retain his resentment 'against me for so long a time; espe-'cially, as he might have been convin-'ced of the truth of what I asserted by 'the extraordinary state in which I have 'lain all this while.'—'You forget, my 'lord,' said Hasem, 'that this was an 'absolute secret, no one from under 'your own roof knowing a word of the 'matter. Such were Mandana's last 'injunctions, and your faithful servants 'never divulged a tittle of it.'

'Did not my friends come to visit 'me,' said Nourjahad, 'during that 'interval in which I slept?'—'Those 'whom you called your friends,' answered Hasem, 'came, as usual, during 'the first month of your dormant state; 'but being refused admittance, under 'pretence that your health was so much 'declined, that you were not in a con-'dition to receive them, they soon de-'sisted from their visits; and, finding 'they could no more be entertained with 'feasting and jollity, they have never 'since inquired after you.'

'Ungrateful wretches!' said Nourja-had, 'I cast them off for ever. Yet it is 'an irksome thing to live without friends. 'You, Hasem, are a prudent and honest 'man, but still you are my servant; I 'cannot therefore consider you on that 'footing of equality which friendship 'requires.'—'There is one man,' said Hasem, 'who has shewn himself grate-'ful and compassionate; and those two 'virtues never come alone, but are ever 'found attended with many others.'—'Oh, name him,' said Nourjahad. 'It 'is Zamgrad,' replied Hasem, 'that 'officer of the sultan's whom you once 'obliged by a trifling present of a ring: 'he never fails sending every day to en-'quire after your welfare; nay, he has 'often called himself, and expressed an 'honest sorrow for the ill state of health 'to which I told him you were reduced, 'tenderly blaming the sultan for his ri-'gorous confinement of you.'

'Worthy Zamgrad!' said Nourjahad; 'thou, thou alone, shalt be the chosen 'friend of my heart. The rest of my 'worthless acquaintance I from this 'minute discard.

'I will write to Schemzeddin,' pur-sued he; 'perhaps he may now relent, 'and restore me to my liberty. I long 'to shift the scene, and remove to some 'place where Mandana's image may 'not be so often revived in my memory. 'Wert thou not, Hasem, about to pro-'cure for me a noble seat in the coun-'try, which I was going to take a view 'of that day on which the good Zam-'grad came to carry me before the sul-'tan? If I might but retire thither, I 'should think myself happy.'

'Alas, my lord,' replied Hasem, 'that 'fine seat cannot now be yours. You 'may remember I made only a condi-'tional agreement with the owner of it, 'depending on your approbation of the 'place after your having seen it.'—'I 'recollect it,' said Nourjahad; 'but may 'it not still be mine?'—'By no means,' answered Hasem; 'the owner has long 'since disposed of it to another.'

'That is unlucky,' said Nourjahad; 'but we can easily find another. Be it 'your care to look out for one, while I 'endeavour to move the sultan in my 'favour.'

Hasem was not slow in executing his master's orders. In three days he told him he had seen a villa, which seemed to him to surpass all the descriptions of Eden in it's primary state of beauty. 'It is but at the distance of ten leagues 'from Ormuz,' said he. 'The house 'and gardens are in compleat order; 'and you may purchase the whole for 'fifty thousand pieces of gold. The 'sultan himself hath not in his posses-

'sion any thing more delightful.'—'I will have it,' said Nourjahad: 'get the money ready; you have the keys of my coffers, and they contain more than that sum.'

'My lord,' answered Hasem, 'when you last saw them, they did contain much more; but you will be pleased to recollect, that it is above four years since, and that your household has been maintained during that time; which, notwithstanding I have used the utmost œconomy, must needs have somewhat diminished your treasury.'—'I had forgot,' replied Nourjahad, 'but I will soon supply you with the gold you want.'

Accordingly he paid a visit to the subterraneous cave that very night; where finding every thing as he had left it, he loaded himself with a quantity of gold sufficient to prevent the necessity of drawing from his hidden store of wealth for a considerable time.

Intent now on the pursuit of his pleasures, he neglected not applying to the sultan for a repeal, or at least a mitigation of his sentence. He writ to Schemzeddin a letter in terms full of humility; thinking, if he could remove his incredulity, by convincing him that the extraordinary fact he had related was nothing more than the truth, that the sultan would no longer deny him his liberty. He scrupled not to acquaint him, that he had been for more than four years in a profound sleep: for the confirmation of which fact, strange as it might seem to his majesty, he desired leave to appeal to every one of his own household; and conjured the sultan to take the trouble of informing himself more fully from some of his people, whom he might cause to be brought into his presence, and privately examined; as he confessed he did not wish to have so uncommon an event divulged.

Nourjahad, from this expedient, had great hopes of obtaining his desire; but the event turned out contrary to his expectations.

Zamgrad, two days after, brought him an answer from the sultan in writing. Nourjahad laid the paper on his head; then kissing the seals, he broke them open, and read as follows:

'I have not been unmindful of thy motions; and, I was pleased to hear from time to time, that, for these four years past, order and decency have been preserved in thy dwelling. I flattered myself that this was owing to thy having returned to a sense of thy duty; but my hope deceived me, when I found that Nourjahad was, by a violent malady which seized him, (doubtless the effects of his intemperance) disqualified from indulging in those excesses in which he was wont to riot.

'This visitation from Heaven, I thought, would have produced salutary effects on thy mind; and hoped, if the angel of health were again to revisit thy pillow, that thou wouldst make a different use of thy recovered strength. How must my indignation, then, be rouzed against thee, abandoned as thou art to perdition, to find thou persistest in thy enormous folly and wickedness, and continuest to abuse the patience of thy benefactor and sovereign master with such unparalleled falshoods! A prince less merciful than myself would no longer delay to punish thee with death: but I give thee thy wretched life; spend it, if thou canst, in penitence. Nay, I will so far indulge thee, as to permit thee, for the more perfect recovery of thy health, to retire to thy house in the country; but, at the peril of thy head, presume not to stir beyond the bounds of thy own habitation.'

Nourjahad now too late found his error, in endeavouring to force belief of a thing which appeared so incredible; and wished he had rather availed himself of the sultan's prepossessions in favour of the story propagated by his servants, as he found that would have been the wiser course.

'What a world is this,' said he to Zamgrad, after having read the letter, 'where he who ought to be the rewarder of truth, and the dispenser of justice, shuts his ears against conviction, and condemns an innocent man for endeavouring to set him right! But I will not involve you in the punishment imposed on my imaginary guilt, by requiring your belief of what I have in vain endeavoured to convince the incredulous Schemzeddin.'

'I know not, my lord,' replied Zamgrad, 'what has passed between the sultan and you: of this only I am certain, that he seems exceedingly enraged against you. I would it were in my power, from the respect I bear you, to mitigate his resentment.'

'I thank

'I thank thee, gentle Zamgrad,' said Nourjahad; 'I find thou, of all my numerous acquaintance, art the only man 'who has shewn any attachment to me. 'If the friendship of one labouring under the displeasure of his prince be worth thy accepting, I offer thee mine, 'and conjure thee to grant me yours in 'return. The base ingratitude I have 'already experienced from the rest of 'my pretended friends, has determined 'me to disclaim all society with them: 'if thou wilt sometimes visit me in my 'retirement, thou wilt find Nourjahad 'not undeserving of thy kindness.'

Zamgrad promised to see him as often as he could, and took his leave.

However vexed Nourjahad was at his disappointment, in finding himself, by being still debarred of his liberty, deprived, for a time at least, from executing one of his favourite purposes, that of travelling all over the world; he yet contented himself with the reflection, that this project was only postponed to another opportunity; and that he should have time enough for executing his design after Schemzeddin, and many of his posterity, were in their graves. 'I will 'not waste my hours,' said he, 'in 'fruitless languishment for what I can-'not at present attain, but make the 'most of the good which now offers 'itself to my acceptance.'

He ordered Hasem to pay down the money forthwith for that fine seat. 'I 'will remove thither,' said he, 'immediately; and make myself some re-'compence, by all the means that art 'can devise, for that cruel, long trance, 'which overpowered me so unseason-'ably: I hope I shall not be visited by 'another for these fifty or sixty years at 'least.'

Hasem's diligence kept pace with his lord's impatience: he got every thing in readiness for his reception at his rural mansion; and, to avoid the notice which might be taken of so numerous a seraglio, and such a train of domesticks, the prudent Hasem advised that they should set out and travel by night. 'This precau-'tion,' said he, 'will prevent the ma-'lice of your enemies from making ill-'natured representations of your con-'duct to the sultan; and as you yourself 'are supposed by every body in Ormuz 'to have laboured under a long and 'painful illness, I think, to give colour 'to this report, it would be most advise-'able for you to be carried in a litter.' As Nourjahad loved his ease, he readily enough consented to this proposal; and in this manner suffered himself to be conveyed to his new habitation.

On his arrival, he found Hasem had not exaggerated in his description of this place. The house, or rather palace, for such it might be called, infinitely exceeded his expectations; but, above all, the gardens were so delicious, that his senses were ravished with delight: he declared, that those mansions of joy prepared for the reception of the faithful could not exceed them; and, forgetting that this paradise was to be his prison, he ordered that a pavilion of light brocade should be reared for him in the midst of his garden, where he purposed to enjoy the cool hours of the evening, amidst the noise of falling waters, and the wild notes of innumerable birds who had taken up their residence in this terrestrial paradise.

Behold him now once more in the possession of every thing for which the heart of man, in the wildest wishes of Epicurean phrenzy, could pant. He gave the reins to his passions; he again became the slave of voluptuous appetites; he submitted a second time to the power of beauty; he invented new modes of luxury; and his delightful abode became the scene of every licentious pleasure.

The delicacies and profusion in which he himself wallowed, made him forget that there were wants or miseries among his fellow-creatures; and, as he had but little intercourse with mankind, except with those who flattered his follies, or administered to his loose pleasures, he became hardened to all the social affections: he ceased to relieve the poor, because they never came in his way; and, with a heart naturally generous and benevolent, he lived only for himself.

Immersed in sensual gratifications, he lost all relish for any others. The poets and sages, whom he entertained in his house, began to grow irksome to him: he derided the wisdom and philosophy of the latter; and, if they attempted to entertain him with learned or grave discourses, he laughed at them; and, at length, thinking their company tedious, he turned them out of his house.

His bards would have shared the same fate, if they had not, by a timely address, rendered their art subservient to his depraved inclinations. They com-

posed nothing but pieces, filled with adulation, on himself, or light verses in praise of one or other of his mistresses; these were set to melting airs, and sung accompanied by the lute.

Thus did Nourjahad pass his days. Every rising sun beheld some fresh outrage on the laws of temperance and decency; and the shades of every night descended on his unatoned offences.

The delightful season of the year, winged with pleasures, was now almost fled, when one of the most extravagant projects came into the head of Nourjahad that ever entered the imagination of man.

As the gardens of his palace were exceedingly delicious, he vainly fancied that they must be very like the regions of paradise, (where all good Mussulmen are received after death;) and that, in order to make the resemblance perfectly compleat, he would cause the women of his seraglio to personate the Houris, those beautiful virgins who are given as a reward to all true believers. He himself would needs represent Mahomet; and one of his mistresses whom he loved best, and who was indeed the handsomest of them, he would have to appear under the name and character of Cadiga, the favourite wife of the great Prophet.

The idea, wild and profane as it was, was notwithstanding readily adopted by all the people about him, no one presuming to dispute his will. Nor were the women on this occasion much inclined to do so, as it served them for a very agreeable amusement.

Some debates however arose among them on account of the dresses proper to be worn on this occasion, as none of them remembered to have read in the Koran what sort of habits the Houris wore; and some of the ladies gave it as their opinion, that those beauties went naked.

After many disputes on the subject, however, they struck a sort of medium, and agreed to be attired in loose robes of the thinnest Persian gauze, with chaplets of flowers on their heads.

Nourjahad approved of the invention, and gave orders to Hasem to prepare for this celestial masquerade with all possible diligence; charging him to leave nothing out that could render the entertainment worthy of Mahomet himself.

Neither art nor expence were spared on this extraordinary occasion. He gave commandment that the fountains which adorned his garden should be so contrived, that, instead of water, they should pour forth milk and wine; that the seasons should be anticipated, and the early fragrance of the spring should be united with the more vivid colours of the glowing summer. In short, that fruits, blossoms, and flowers, should at once unite their various beauties, to embellish this terrestrial paradise.

The diligence of Hasem was so active, that every thing was got in readiness, even sooner than Nourjahad expected. He descended into his garden to take a survey of these wondrous preparations; and, finding all exactly to his mind, he gave orders to his women to hold themselves prepared to act their parts; telling them, that on that very evening he would give them a foretaste of the ravishing pleasures they were to enjoy in the happy regions of light.

The weather was extremely hot; and Nourjahad, in order to take a view of the magnificent decorations, having fatigued himself with wandering through his elysium, retired to his apartment, and threw himself down on a sopha, with intent to take a short repose, the better to prepare himself for the excesses of the night; leaving orders with Hasem and Cadiga to awake him from sleep before sun-set.

Nourjahad, however, opened his eyes without any one's having rouzed him from his slumbers; when perceiving that the day was almost closed, and finding that his commands had been neglected, he flew into a violent passion, suspecting that his women had prevailed on Hasem to grant them this opportunity, while he slept, of indulging themselves in liberties without that restraint to which they were accustomed in his presence.

Enraged at the thought, he resolved to have them called before him; and after severely reprimanding them, and punishing Hasem proportionally to his fault, to have his women all locked up, and postpone his festivity till he was in a better humour to relish it.

Impatient, and even furious at his disappointment, he stamped on the floor with his foot; when immediately a black eunuch presented himself at the door. 'Go,' said he, his words almost choaked with indignation, 'go and bid my wo-'men, one and all, hasten directly into 'my presence.'

The

The ſlave retired in reſpectful ſilence; and preſently after all the ladies of his ſeraglio entered his apartment. They were, according to the cuſtom, covered with veils; but, on appearing in their lord's preſence, they threw them off. But, O Heaven! what was Nourjahad's anger and aſtoniſhment, when, inſtead of the beautiful Houris whom he expected to ſee, he beheld a train of wrinkled and deformed old hags!

Amazement and rage for a while ſuſpended the power of ſpeech: when the foremoſt of the old women approaching, and offering to embrace him, he thruſt her rudely from him—'Deteſtable fiend!' ſaid he, 'whence this preſumption? 'Where are my ſlaves? Where is Haſem, 'and the women of my ſeraglio? The 'traitoreſſes! they ſhall pay dearly for 'thus abuſing my indulgence.'

The old women at this all fell upon their faces to the ground; but the firſt who had advanced addreſſing herſelf to ſpeak—'Avaunt!' cried Nourjahad, 'begone wretches, and rid my ſight of 'ſuch hideous aſpects.'

'Alas, my lord!' replied the old woman, 'have you entirely forgot me? 'has time left no traces to remind you 'of your once beloved Cadiga?'—'Cadiga! thou Cadiga? Do not provoke 'me,' ſaid Nourjahad, 'or, by Allah, 'I'll ſpurn thee with my foot.'

The old women now all ſet up a lamentable cry: 'Miſerable wretches 'that we are,' ſaid they, beating their withered breaſts, 'it had been happy 'for us if we had all died in our youth, 'rather than have thus out-lived our 'lord's affections!'

'Evil betide ye,' ſaid Nourjahad, 'who in the name of deformity are ye 'all?' Hereupon the beldames cried out with one voice, 'Your miſtreſſes! 'the once admired and loved partners of 'your bed; but the relentleſs hand of 'time has made ſuch cruel ravages on our 'charms, that we do not wonder thou 'ſhouldſt find it impoſſible to recollect 'us.'

Nourjahad now began to ſuſpect that he had been overpowered by a ſecond trance. 'Why, how long, in the devil's 'name, have I then ſlept?' ſaid he.

'Forty years and eleven moons,' anſwered the lady who called herſelf Cadiga. 'Thou lieſt, I am ſure,' ſaid Nourjahad, 'for it appears to me but as 'yeſterday ſince I ordered thee (if thou 'really art Cadiga) to awake me at a 'certain hour, that I might enjoy the 'glorious entertainment prepared for me 'in the gardens of the Houris.'

'I do remember it,' ſaid Cadiga, 'and we your faithful ſlaves were to perſonate thoſe beautiful virgins. Alas, 'alas! we are not now fit to repreſent 'thoſe daughters of paradiſe!'—'Thou 'art fitter,' ſaid Nourjahad, 'to repreſent the furies. I tell thee again, it 'cannot be many hours ſince I firſt fell 'into a ſlumber.'

'It may well ſeem ſo,' anſwered Cadiga, 'buried as your ſenſes have been 'in forgetfulneſs, and every faculty 'conſigned to oblivion, that the interval 'of time ſo paſt muſt be quite annihilated; yet it is moſt certain that you 'have ſlept as long as I tell you.'

Nourjahad upon this examined the faces of the old women one after the other, but finding them ſo totally different from what they once were, he ſwore that he did not believe a word they ſaid. 'Thou Cadiga!' ſaid he, 'the black-'browed Cadiga, whoſe enchanting 'ſmiles beguiled all hearts; thou art 'wondrouſly like her I confeſs!'

'Yet, that I am that identical fair one,' anſwered ſhe, 'I ſhall be able to convince you, from a remarkable ſignature which I bear on my boſom, and 'which ſtill remains, though the reſt of 'my perſon is ſo entirely changed.'

Saying this, ſhe uncovered her breaſt, on which the figure of a roſe-bud was delineated by the hand of nature. Nourjahad well remembered the mark; he had once thought it a beauty, and made it the ſubject of an amorous ſonnet, when the boſom of the fair Cadiga was as white and as ſmooth as alabaſter.

Convinced by this proof, that theſe women were really what they pretended to be, Nourjahad could not conceal his vexation. 'By the Temple of Mecca,' ſaid he, 'this Genius of mine is no better than he ſhould be, and I begin to 'ſuſpect he is little leſs than an evil 'ſpirit, or he could not thus take delight 'in perſecuting me for nothing.'

'Ah, my lord,' ſaid Cadiga, 'I am 'not ignorant of the ſtrange fate by 'which your life is governed. Haſem, 'your faithful Haſem, communicated 'the ſecret to me with his dying breath.' —'Is Haſem dead?' cried Nourjahad. 'He is, my lord,' anſwered Cadiga, 'and ſo is the worthy Zamgrad.'—

'What

'What is become of my son?' said Nourjahad; 'I hope he has not shared the 'same fate?'—'It were better that he 'had,' replied Cadiga, 'for it is now 'some five and twenty years since he ran 'away from the governor in whose 'hands the wise Hasem had placed him 'for his education; and, having in vain 'endeavoured to prevail on that honest 'man to bury you, that, giving out you 'were deceased, he might take possession 'of all your wealth; finding he could 'not succeed in his unnatural design, he 'took an opportunity of breaking open 'your cabinet, and securing all the 'treasure he could find, stole secretly 'away, and has never been heard of 'since.'

'Ungrateful viper!' exclaimed Nourjahad; 'and thou cruel Genius, thus to 'imbitter a life, which was thy own 'voluntary gift; for thou cameſt to me 'unasked.'

'Had not,' proceeded Cadiga, 'myself and the rest of your women consented to give up all our jewels to Hasem, who turned them into money, we 'must long ere this have been reduced 'to want; for your unworthy son stripped you of all your wealth: but Hasem conducted every thing with the 'same regularity and care as if you had 'been awake, discharging such of your 'domesticks as he thought unnecessary, 'and replacing such as died in your service; and it is not many days since 'the good old man was himself summoned away by the angel of death.'

'Tell me,' said Nourjahad,' does 'Schemzeddin still live?'

'He does,' replied Cadiga; 'but, 'bending under the weight of age and 'infirmities, he is become so intolerably 'peevish, that no one dares speak to him. 'Indeed, he is at times so fantastical 'and perverse, that it is secretly whispered, he is not perfectly in his senses.'—'It may very well be,' said Nourjahad, 'that he is doating by this time, 'for he cannot be much less than seventy years old. The Genius has in 'this article been faithful to his promise; for I, though nearly of the same 'age, find myself as vigorous and 'healthy as ever; but I give him little 'thanks for this, seeing he has defrauded me of such an unconscionable portion of my life.'

'My lord,' said Cadiga,' there is one 'circumstance which may in some measure reconcile you to what has already 'happened. You know, by the severity 'of the sultan, you have been the greatest part of your days a prisoner; which 'condition, however it might have been 'alleviated by the pleasures which surrounded you, must nevertheless have 'by this time grown exceedingly irksome, had you all the while been sensible of your restraint; and you would 'now probably have been so palled with 'the repetition of the same enjoyments, 'that I know not whether your good 'Genius has not, instead of cruelty, 'shewn an extreme indulgence, in rendering you for such a number of years 'unconscious of your misfortune; especially as the sultan, by what I learnt 'from Hasem, has, notwithstanding the 'length of time since he first deprived 'you of your liberty, never reversed the 'barbarous sentence.'

'What thou hast said has some colour,' replied Nourjahad, 'and I am 'very much inclined to think thou hast 'hit upon the truth. Sage Cadiga,' pursued he, 'what thou hast lost in beauty, 'thou hast gained in wisdom; and, 'though I can no longer regard thee 'with tenderness, I will still retain thee 'in my service, and constitute thee governess over my female slaves; for I 'must have my seraglio supplied with a 'new race of beauties. For the rest of 'those hags, as I do not know of any 'thing they are now good for, I desire 'to see them no more.—Be gone,' said he to them; 'I shall give orders to Cadiga concerning you.'

When Nourjahad was left alone, he began seriously to reflect on his condition. 'How unhappy I am,' said he, 'thus to find myself at once deprived of 'every thing that was dear to me; my 'two faithful friends, Hasem and Zamgrad; all the blooming beauties of my 'seraglio, who used to delight my eyes; 'but, above all, my son, whose ingratitude and cruelty pierces me more 'deeply than all my other losses; and 'that rigid spirit who presides over my 'life, to take advantage of those hours 'of insensibility, to deprive me of all 'my comforts! Yet, why do I reproach 'my protector for that? the same ills 'might have befallen me, had the progress of my life been conducted by the 'common laws of nature. I must have 'seen the death of my friends, and they 'might possibly have been snatched from 'me in a manner equally sudden and 'surprising as their loss now appears.

'My

'My women, had I seen them every 'day, must necessarily by this time have 'grown old and disgustful to me; and 'I should certainly before now have 'discarded two or three generations of 'beauties. My son, too, would, in his 'heart, have been the same thankless 'and perfidious creature that he has now 'shewn himself, had the eye of watchful 'authority been constantly open on his 'conduct; and there is only this dif-'ference, perhaps, between me and every 'other parent, that I have lived to see 'my offspring trampling on filial duty, 'riotously seizing on my wealth, leaving 'my family to poverty, and not so much 'as bestowing a grateful thought on him 'who gave him being, and by whose 'spoils he is enriched: while other fa-'thers, deceived by a specious outside, 'in the full persuasion of the piety, jus-'tice, and affection of their children, 'have descended to the grave in peace; 'while their heirs, with as little remorse 'as my graceless child, have laughed at 'their memories.

'I see it is in vain,' proceeded he, 'to escape the miseries that are allotted 'to human life. Fool that I was to sub-'ject myself to them more by ten thou-'sand fold than any other can possibly 'experience!—But stop, Nourjahad, how 'weak are thy complaints! thou knowest 'the conditions of thy existence, and 'that thou must of necessity behold the 'decay and dissolution of every thing 'that is mortal; take comfort then, and 'do not imbitter thy days by melan-'choly reflections, but resolve for the 'future to let no events disturb thy 'peace, seize every fleeting joy as it 'passes, and let variety be thy Heaven, 'for thou seest there is nothing perma-'nent.'

As Nourjahad was never used, but on occasions of distress, to make use of his reason or philosophy, he no sooner found an alleviation of the evil, than he put them both to flight, as impertinent intruders. He did not therefore long disturb himself with disagreeable reflections, but resolved as soon as possible to return to those pleasures which he thought constituted the felicity of man's life.

He gave himself but little concern about those treasures of which his son had robbed him; knowing he had an inexhaustible fund of wealth, of which, agreeably to the Genius's promise, he could not be deprived.

From Cadiga he learnt that his house at Ormuz was in the same condition he had left it; Hasem having taken care to place a diligent and faithful servant there, on whom he might rely with equal security as on himself: 'And he had the 'farther precaution,' added Cadiga, 'not 'long before his death, to solicit, through 'Zamgrad's means, the sultan's permis-'sion for your return thither. "This," 'said he, "may be necessary, in case our "lord awakes before Schemzeddin's de-"cease, and should have a desire to quit "this place, he may do it without the "trouble of a fresh application."

'And has the sultan granted this?' cried Nourjahad.

'He has,' answered Cadiga, 'as a 'matter of great indulgence: for hav-'ing, as he said, heard that your pro-'fusion was unbounded, finding there 'were no hopes of reclaiming you, he 'had determined to confine you for the 'remainder of your life; with this liberty, 'however, that you might make choice 'either of this palace, or your house at 'Ormuz, for your prison.'

'Fool,' cried Nourjahad; 'he little 'imagines how impotent are his threats, 'when he speaks of confining me for 'life! I would, however, *he* were dead, 'that I might be rid of this irksome re-'straint; but it cannot last much longer, 'for the days of Schemzeddin must 'needs draw towards a period. I will 'not, mean while, bestow any farther 'thought on him, but avail myself of 'that liberty which he has allowed me, 'and return to Ormuz; for I am weary 'of this solitude, seeing I have lost every 'thing that could render my retirement 'agreeable.

'Do thou,' said he, 'see that every 'thing is prepared for my reception. I 'would have my seraglio filled once 'more, otherwise my house, when I en-'ter it, will appear a desart to me, and 'I shall be at a loss how to divert the 'tedious hours which may yet remain 'of my confinement. I will depend on 'thy experience and skill in beauty, to 'make choice of such virgins as you 'think will well supply the place of 'those I have lost.'

'I have a friend,' said Cadiga, 'a 'merchant, who deals in female slaves; 'and he has always such a number, 'that it will be easy to select from 'among them some whose charms can-'not fail to please you. I will order

'him

'him to repair to your houſe, and bring 'with him a collection of the rareſt 'beauties he has in his poſſeſſion; you 'may then chuſe for yourſelf.'

'Be it ſo,' ſaid Nourjahad; 'I leave 'the conduct of every thing to thee: if 'I approve of the damſels, I ſhall not 'ſcruple at any price for their purchaſe.'

The day being come for his return to Ormuz, full of pleaſing eagerneſs to behold the divine creatures which he was told waited his arrival, he ſet out with a ſplendid equipage; but had the mortification to behold his chariot ſurrounded by a party of the ſultan's guards, with drawn ſabres in their hands, to repreſs the curioſity of thoſe who might approach the chariot to gaze at the perſon who was conducted in ſo unuſual a manner.

'I could well excuſe this part of my 'retinue,' ſaid Nourjahad, as he paſſed along; 'but there is no reſiſting 'the commands of this whimſical old 'fellow Schemzeddin.' Being thus conducted to his houſe, the guards as before poſted themſelves round it.

However chagrined Nourjahad was at this circumſtance, he was reſolved it ſhould not interrupt his pleaſures.

He found the young ſlaves whom Cadiga had prepared all waiting his arrival. They were richly cloathed, and ſtanding together in a row in a long gallery through which he was to paſs. On his entering, the merchant to whom they belonged ordered the women to unveil.

Nourjahad examined them one after the other, but none of them pleaſed him. One had features too large, and another's were too ſmall; the complexion of this was not brilliant, and the air of that wanted ſoftneſs; this damſel was too tall, and the next was ill proportioned.

'Doſt thou call theſe beauties?' ſaid Nourjahad, angrily. 'By my life they 'are a pack of as awkward damſels as 'ever I beheld.'

'Surely, my lord,' cried the merchant, 'you do not ſpeak as you think. 'Theſe young maids are allowed by all 'good judges to be the moſt perfect beauties that ever were ſeen in Perſia: the 'ſultan himſelf has none equal to them 'in his ſeraglio.'

'I tell thee, man,' ſaid Nourjahad, 'they are not worthy even to wait on 'thoſe of whom I myſelf was formerly 'maſter.'—'I know not that, my lord,' anſwered the merchant; 'but this I am 'ſure of, that I can have any ſum which 'I ſhall demand for their purchaſe.'— 'Then thou muſt carry them to ſome 'other market,' cried Nourjahad, 'for 'to me they appear fit for nothing but 'ſlaves.'

Cadiga, who was preſent, now taking Nourjahad aſide, ſaid —'Theſe, my 'lord, theſe damſels are leſs charming 'than thoſe of which you were formerly 'poſſeſſed; but the taſte for beauty is 'quite altered ſince that time: you may 'aſſure yourſelf that none will be offered 'to your acceptance that will exceed 'theſe. Were I and my companions, 'whom you once ſo much admired, to 'be reſtored to our youth again, we 'ſhould not now be looked upon; ſuch 'is the fantaſtick turn of the age.'

'If this be ſo,' ſaid Nourjahad, 'I ſhall 'be very unfaſhionable in my amours; 'for the preſent, however, I ſhall con'tent myſelf with ſome of the moſt 'tolerable of theſe maidens, till I have 'time and opportunity of ſupplying my'ſelf with better.'

Saying this, he ſelected half a dozen of thoſe young ſlaves whom he thought the moſt agreeable; and, having paid the merchant what he demanded for them, diſmiſſed the reſt.

Nourjahad having now once more eſtabliſhed his houſhold, and perceiving that theſe damſels, upon a longer acquaintance, were really amiable, expected to find himſelf reſtored to his former contentment and alacrity of ſpirits; but in this he was deceived: he was ſeized with a laſſitude that rendered his days tireſome. The vacancy he found in his heart was inſupportable: ſurrounded by new faces, he ſaw nobody for whom he could entertain either love or friendſhip. 'This is a comfortleſs life,' would he exclaim to himſelf; 'yet how often, 'during the date of my exiſtence, muſt 'this ſituation, melancholy as it is, re'cur to me! A friend ſhall no ſooner 'be endeared to me by long experience 'of kindneſs and fidelity, without 'which it is impoſſible I ſhould regard 'him, than death will deprive me of 'him, as it has already done of Haſem 'and Zamgrad: and how many bright 'eyes am I doomed to ſee for ever cloſed, 'or, what is as mortifying, to behold 'their faded luſtre! There is but one 'way,' ſaid he, 'to guard againſt thoſe 'evils:

'evils. I will no more contract friend-
'ships among men; nor ever again suf-
'fer my mind to be subdued by female
'charms: I will confound all distinc-
'tion by variety, nor permit one wo-
'man to engross my heart; for I find by
'sad experience, even after such an
'amazing length of time, that the bare
'idea of my dear Mandana inspires me
'with more tenderness than ever I ex-
'perienced from the fondest blandish-
'ments of all the beauties I have since
'possessed.'

Nourjahad endeavoured to banish those melancholy thoughts by others more agreeable; but he had no resources within himself; he had nothing to reflect on from which he could derive any satisfaction. 'My life,' said he, 'appears 'like a dream of pleasure, that has pas-'sed away without leaving any substan-'tial effects; and I am even already 'weary of it, though in fact, notwith-'standing my advanced age, I have en-'joyed it but a short time, dating from 'that period whence my immortality 'commenced.'

He tried to read, to divert his distempered thoughts; but from books he could receive no entertainment. If he turned over the pages of philosophers, moralists, or expounders of the mysteries of his religion, 'What have I to do with 'thy tedious lessons, or dry precepts?' said he: 'thou writest to men like thy-'self, subject to mortality; thou teacheft 'them how to live, that they may learn 'how to die; but what is this to me? 'as I am not subject to the latter, thy 'advice can be of little use to me in re-'gard to the former.'

He had next recourse to the poets; but their works gave him as little pleasure as the others. Absorbed as he had been in the grosser pleasures of sense, he had lost those fine feelings which constitute that delicate and pleasing perception we have of such images as are addressed to the heart. He knew the fallacy, and even essence, of all sensual enjoyments; and to the most warm descriptions of love, and the most pathetick pictures of grief, he was equally insensible.

'Poor wretches,' said he, on reading a fine elegy written by a lover on the death of his mistress; 'doomed as thou 'wert to a short span of life and a nar-'row circle of enjoyments, thou mag-'nifiest every thing within thy confined 'sphere: one single object having en-'grossed thy whole heart, and inspired 'thee with transports, thou dost im-'mortalize her charms. Her death, de-'spairing to supply her place, filled thy 'eyes with tears, and taught thee to re-'cord thy own sorrows with her praises. 'I partake not of thy pleasures or thy 'pains; none but such as are liable to 'the same fate can be affected by thy 'sentiments.'

When he read of the death of heroes and kings, and the destruction of cities, or the revolution of empires, 'How cir-'cumscribed,' said he, 'is the know-'ledge of a paltry historian! who is at 'the pains of collecting the scanty ma-'terials which a life of forty or fifty 'years perhaps affords him; and then he 'makes a mighty parade of learning, 'with the poor pittance for which he has 'been drudging all his days. How in-'finitely superior will my fund of in-'formation be, who shall myself be an 'eye-witness to events as extraordinary 'as these, and numbered a thousand 'times over; for, doubtless, the same 'things which have happened will hap-'pen again. What curiosity can you 'incite in me, who shall infallibly see 'the same chain of causes and effects 'take place over and over again in the 'vast round of eternity?'

The accounts of travellers, descriptions of the manners and customs of various countries, and books of geography, afforded him a little more entertainment. 'All these places,' said he, 'I shall visit in my own proper person, 'and shall then be able to judge whether 'these accounts are just.'

While he endeavoured to fill up the vacuity he found in his mind, his time was spent at best but in a sort of insipid tranquillity. The voluptuary has no taste for mental pleasures.

He every now and then returned to his former excesses; but he had not the same relish for them as before: satiety succeeded every enjoyment. In vain did his slaves torture their invention to procure new delights for him: the powers of luxury were exhausted; and his appetites palled with abundance.

He grew peevish, morose, tyrannical; cruelty took possession of his breast; he abused his women and beat his slaves; and seemed to enjoy no satisfaction but that of tormenting others.

In vain did the prudent Cadiga, who had still some little influence over him,

expostulate with him on the enormity of his behaviour.

'How dareſt thou,' ſaid he, 'preſume to dictate to thy maſter, or to cenſure his conduct! To whom am I accountable for my actions?'—'To God and our prophet,' anſwered Cadiga, with a boldneſs that provoked Nourjahad's wrath. 'Thou lyeſt,' ſaid he: 'as I am exempt from death, I never can be brought to judgment; what, then, have I to fear from the reſentment, or hope from the favour, of the powers whom thou nameſt?'

'But haſt thou no regard,' ſaid Cadiga, 'for the laws of ſociety, nor pity for the ſufferings of thy fellow-creatures, whom thou makeſt to groan every day under thy cruelty?'

'Fooliſh woman,' ſaid Nourjahad, doſt thou talk to me of laws, who think myſelf bound by none? Civil and religious laws are ſo interwoven, that you cannot pluck out a ſingle thread without ſpoiling the whole texture; and if I cut the woof, thinkeſt thou that I will ſpare the weft, when I can do it with impunity? The privilege of immortality which I enjoy would be beſtowed on me to little purpoſe, if I were to ſuffer the weak prejudices of religion, in which I am no way concerned, to check me in any of my purſuits. And what can the feeble laws of man do? My life they cannot reach.'—'Yet thou art a priſoner notwithſtanding,' anſwered Cadiga. 'True,' replied Nourjahad; 'but even in my confinements I am furſeited with delights. Schemzeddin's death muſt ſoon give me that liberty which, conſidering the race of uncontrouled freedom I have before me, I do not now think worth attempting: I ſhall then expatiate freely all over the globe. Meanwhile I tell thee, woman, I am weary of the dull round of reiterated enjoyments which are provided for me; my ſenſual appetites are cloyed; I have no taſte for intellectual pleaſures; and I muſt have recourſe to thoſe which gratify the malevolent paſſions.'

'Thou art not fit to live,' cried Cadiga, with a warmth of which ſhe had cauſe to repent; for Nourjahad, enraged at her reply, plucked a poniard from his girdle—'Go tell thy prophet ſo,' ſaid he, and plunged it into the ſide of the unfortunate ſlave, who fell at his feet weltering in blood.

The brutal Nourjahad, ſo far from being moved with this ſpectacle, turned from her with indifference; and, quitting the chamber, entered the apartments of his women, to whom with barbarous mirth he related what he had done.

Though he had now loſt all reliſh for delicate pleaſures, or even for the more groſs enjoyments of ſenſe, he nevertheleſs indulged himſelf in them to exceſs; and knowing he was not accountable to any one for the death of his ſlave, he thought no more of Cadiga; but, after a day ſpent in extravagant debauchery, ſunk to repoſe.

But his eyes were opened to a different ſcene from that on which he had cloſed them. He no ſooner awoke than he perceived a man ſitting at his bed's foot, who ſeemed to be plunged in ſorrow; he leaned penſively on his arm, holding a handkerchief before his eyes.

'What mockery is this?' ſaid Nourjahad: 'didſt thou ſuppoſe me dead; and art thou come to mourn over me?'

'Not ſo, my lord,' replied the man; 'I knew that you ſtill lived: but the ſultan is dead; the good Schemzeddin is no more!'—'I am glad of it,' replied Nourjahad; 'I ſhall now obtain my liberty. Who then is to reign in Ormuz?'—'Doubtleſs, my lord,' anſwered the man, 'the prince Schemerzad, the eldeſt ſon of Schemzeddin.'—'Thou raveſt,' cried Nourjahad: 'Schemzeddin has no ſon.'—'Pardon me, my lord,' ſaid the man; 'the ſultana Nourmahal was delivered of this prince the very hour on which the unfortunate Cadiga died by your hand.'—'Thou art inſolent,' replied Nourjahad, 'to mention that circumſtance: but if ſo, we have indeed got a very young ſucceſſor to the throne.'—'My lord,' anſwered the man, 'Schemerzad is allowed to be one of the moſt accompliſhed and wiſe young princes in all Perſia.'—'That is marvellous,' cried Nourjahad, burſting into a fit of laughter: 'a ſultan of four and twenty hours old muſt needs be wondrouſly wiſe and accompliſhed!'—'Nay, my lord,' replied the man, 'the prince is this day exactly twenty years of age.'

Nourjahad, on hearing this, looked in the face of the man, whom, from his dreſs, ſuppoſing he had been one of his ſlaves, he had not regarded before, but now perceived he was a ſtranger. 'Twenty years old!' cried he, ſtarting up;

up; 'thou doſt not tell me ſo!'—'Moſt 'certain,' ſaid the man: 'Schemzed-'din was ſo far advanced in years before 'the birth of the prince, that he deſpair-'ed of ever having a child; yet had the 'righteous monarch the ſatisfaction to 'ſee his beloved ſon arrive at manhood, 'and adorned with ſuch virtues as made 'him worthy to fill his father's throne.' —'When did the old ſultan die?' cried Nourjahad. 'His funeral obſequies 'were performed laſt night,' anſwered the man; 'and the people of Ormuz have 'not yet wiped the tears from their 'eyes.'—'It ſhould ſeem, then,' ſaid Nourjahad, 'that I have ſlept about 'twenty years! if ſo, prithee, who art 'thou? for I do not remember ever to 'have ſeen thy face before.'

'My name,' anſwered the ſtranger, 'is Cozro, and I am the brother of 'Cadiga, that faithful creature whom 'thy ungoverned fury deprived of life.' —'How dareſt thou mention her again?' cried Nourjahad; 'art thou not afraid 'to ſhare the ſame fate thyſelf for thy 'preſumption?'

'I do not value my life,' anſwered Cozro: 'having acquitted myſelf well 'of my duty here, I am ſure of my re-'ward in thoſe bleſſed manſions where 'avarice, luxury, cruelty, and pride, 'can never enter. Strike then, Nour-'jahad, if thou dareſt; diſmiſs me to 'endleſs and uninterrupted joys; and 'live thyſelf a prey to remorſe and diſ-'appointment, the ſlave of paſſions ne-'ver to be gratified, and a ſport to the 'viciſſitudes of fortune.'

Nourjahad was confounded at the undaunted air with which Cozro pronounced theſe words; he trembled with indignation, but had not courage to ſtrike the unarmed man who thus inſulted him: wherefore diſſembling his anger—'I ſee,' ſaid he, 'that thou par-'takeſt of thy ſiſter Cadiga's ſpirit: but, 'anſwer me, How cameſt thou hither; 'and in what condition are the reſt of 'my family?'—'I will tell thee,' anſwered Cozro. 'When Cadiga found 'herſelf dying, ſhe ſent for me: I was 'then a page to one of the emirs of 'Schemzeddin's court. She made me 'kneel by her bed-ſide, and take a ſo-'lemn oath to perform with fidelity and 'ſecrecy what ſhe ſhould enjoin me. 'She then told me the ſecret of your 'life, and conjured me to watch and 'attend you carefully. "I have hi-"therto," ſaid ſhe, "had the conduct "of his houſe; do you ſupply my "place; and do not let Nourjahad, "when he awakes from his trance, be "ſenſible of the loſs of the unfortunate "Cadiga."

'She then called in your principal 'ſlaves, and delivering to me in their 'preſence the keys with which you had 'entruſted her, ſhe told them they were 'henceforth to obey me, as they had 'done her. "Tell my lord," ſaid ſhe 'to me, "that I forgive him the death "which his cruelty inflicted on a wo-"man who loved him to the lateſt mi-"nute of her life." In pronouncing 'theſe words ſhe expired.

'I knew not till then,' purſued Cozro, 'that thou hadſt been the murderer 'of my ſiſter; but ſhe was no ſooner 'dead, than the ſlaves informed me of 'the manner of her death. My reſent-'ment againſt thee was proportioned to 'the horror of thy guilt; and had I 'thrown myſelf at the feet of Schemzed-'din, and implored juſtice on thy crimes, 'neither thy riches nor thy immortality 'would have availed thee; but thou 'wouldſt have been condemned by a 'perpetual decree to have languiſhed 'out thy wretched exiſtence in a vile 'dungeon.'

'And what hindered thee,' cried Nourjahad, 'from purſuing thy revenge, 'ſeeing I was not in a condition to re-'ſiſt thee?'—'My reverence for the 'oath I had taken,' anſwered Cozro; 'and fear of offending the Al-'mighty!'

Nourjahad, at this reply, was ſtruck with a ſecret awe which he could not repel: he remained ſilent while Cozro proceeded—

'I obtained permiſſion of the maſter 'whom I ſerved to leave him, and en-'tered immediately on my new employ-'ment; but I found I had undertaken a 'difficult taſk. Thou hadſt rendered 'thyſelf ſo odious to thy women, that 'not one of them retained the ſmalleſt 'degree of love or fidelity towards thee. 'In ſpite of my vigilance, they made 'thy hated ſeraglio the ſcene of their 'unlawful pleaſures; and, at length, 'having bribed the eunuchs who guard-'ed them, they all in one night fled 'from thy deteſted walls, taking with 'them the ſlaves who had aſſiſted them in 'their purpoſe.'—'Pernicious ſpirit,' exclaimed Nourjahad; 'are theſe the

'fruits I am to reap from thy fatal indulgence!'—'The rest of your servants,' pursued Cozro, 'I endeavoured to keep within the bounds of their duty.'—'And how didst thou succeed?' cried Nourjahad. 'But ill,' replied Cozro: 'they all declared, that nothing could have induced them to stay so long with a master of so capricious and tyrannical a humour, but the luxury and idleness in which thou permittedst them to live; and finding I managed your affairs with œconomy, they one after the other left your house; neither promises nor threats having power to prevent those who stayed longest in thy service from following the example of the first who deserted thee; so that I alone of all thy numerous household have remained faithful to thee; I who, of all others, had the most reason to abhor thee! But I have now acquitted myself of the trust which was reposed in me, and I leave thee as one condemned to wander in an unknown land, where he is to seek out for new associates, and to endeavour, by the power of gold, to bribe that regard from men which his own worth cannot procure for him.'

'Unfortunate wretch that I am!' cried Nourjahad, pierced to the quick with what he had just been told, 'what benefit have I hitherto received from my long life, but that of feeling, by miserable experience, the ingratitude and frailty of man's nature! How transitory have been all my pleasures! The recollection of them dies on my memory, like the departing colours of the rainbow, which fade under the eye of the beholder, and leave not a trace behind; while, on the other hand, every affliction with which I have been visited, has imprinted a deep and lasting wound on my heart, which not even the hand of time itself has been able to heal.'

'What have thy misfortunes been,' said Cozro, 'that are not common to all the race of man?'—'Oh, I have had innumerable griefs,' said Nourjahad. 'After a short enjoyment (during my fatal slumbers) the grave robbed me of Mandana, while she was yet in the bloom of youth and beauty. I lamented her death; tears and heaviness of heart were my portion for many days: yet, remembering that sorrow would not recall the dead, I suffered myself to be comforted, and sought for consolation in the society of my other women, and the fond and innocent caresses of an infant son, whom Mandana left me. Joy and tranquillity revisited my dwelling, and new pleasures courted my acceptance; but they again eluded my grasp; and in one night (for so it appeared to me) my son, like an unnatural viper, forgetting all my tenderness, plundered and deserted me. The two faithful friends in whom I most confided, had closed their eyes for ever; and the beauties of my seraglio, whom I had last beheld fresh and charming as the lilies of the field, I now saw deformed with wrinkles, and bending under the infirmities of age.

'Yet these afflictions I surmounted, and resolved once more to be happy.'—'And wert thou so?' interrupted Cozro. 'No,' replied Nourjahad; 'the treacherous joys deceived me; yet I still looked forward with hope, but now awake to fresh disappointment. I find myself abandoned by those whose false professions of love had lulled me into security, and I rouze myself like a savage beast in the desart, whose paths are shunned by all the children of men.'

Nourjahad could not conclude this speech without a groan, that seemed to rend his heart.

'As thou art,' said Cozro, 'exempt from punishment hereafter, dost thou think also to escape the miseries of this life? Mistaken man! know, that the righteous Being, whose ordinances thou defiest, will even here take vengeance on thy crimes. And if thou wilt look back on thy past life, thou wilt find (for I have heard thy story) that every one of those several ills of which thou complainest, were sent as scourges to remind thee of thy duty, and inflicted immediately after the commission of some notorious breach of it.

'The death of Mandana was preceded by a brutal fit of drunkenness; by which, contrary to the laws of our prophet, thou sufferedst thyself to be overtaken. Then it was thy good Genius, to punish thee, plunged thee into that temporary death, from which thou didst awake to grief and disappointment: but thou madest no use of the admonition, but didst permit

thyself

'thyself to be again swallowed up by 'intemperance; and, not content to 'tread the ordinary paths of vice, thou 'turnedst out of the road, to the commis-'sion of a crime to which thou couldst 'have no temptation but the pride and 'licentiousness of thy heart. Thy pro-'fanation of our holy religion, in pre-'suming to personate our great prophet, 'and make thy concubines represent the 'virgins of paradise, was immediately 'chastised, as it deserved, by a second 'time depriving thee of those faculties 'which thou didst prostitute to such vile 'purposes.

'The ills with which thou foundest 'thyself surrounded, on awaking from 'thy trance, served to no other purpose 'than to stir up thy resentment against 'the Power who governed thy life: and, 'instead of reforming thy wickedness, 'thou soughtest out new ways of ren-'dering thyself still more obnoxious to 'the wrath of Heaven. In the wan-'tonness of thy cruelty, thou stainedst 'thy hands in blood; and that same 'night were thy eyelids sealed up by the 'avenging hand of thy watchful Ge-'nius; and thy depraved senses consign-'ed for twenty years to oblivion! See, 'then,' continued Cozro, 'if a life, 'which is to be a continued round of 'crimes and punishments in alternate 'succession, is a gift worthy to be de-'sired by a wise man? For, assure thy-'self, O Nourjahad, that by the im-'mutable laws of Heaven, one is to be 'a constant concomitant of the other; 'and that, either in this world or the 'next, vice will meet it's just reward.'

'Alas,' replied Nourjahad, 'thou 'hast awakened in me a remorse, of 'which I was never sensible before. I 'look back with shame on the detested 'use I have made of those extraordinary 'gifts vouchsafed me by my guardian 'spirit.

'What shall I do, O Cozro, to ex-'piate the offences I have committed? 'For though I have no dread of punish-'ment hereafter, yet does that æthereal 'spark within inspire me with such hor-'ror for my former crimes, that all the 'vain delights which this world can af-'ford me, will not restore my mind to 'peace, till, by a series of good actions, 'I have atoned for my past offences.'

'If thou art sincere in thy resolu-'tions,' replied Cozro, 'the means, 'thou knowest, are amply in thy power. 'Thy riches will enable thee to diffuse 'blessings among mankind; and thou 'wilt find more true luxury in that, 'than in all the gratifications where-'with thou hast indulged thy appe-'tites.'

'It shall be so,' replied Nourjahad; 'my treasures shall be open to thee, 'thou venerable old man; and do thou 'make it thy business to find out proper 'objects, whereon charity and benevo-'lence may exert their utmost powers.

'Enquire out every family in Ormuz 'whom calamity hath overtaken; and, 'provided they did not bring on their 'distresses by their own wilful miscon-'duct, restore them to prosperity. Seek 'out the helpless and the innocent; and, 'by a timely supply of their wants, se-'cure them against the attacks of po-'verty, or temptations of vice. Search 'for such as you think have talents 'which will render them useful to so-'ciety, but who, for want of the goods 'of fortune, are condemned to obscu-'rity; relieve their necessities, and en-'able them to answer the purposes for 'which nature designed them. Find 'out merit wherever it lies concealed, 'whether witheld from the light by dif-'fidence, chained down and clogged by 'adversity, obscured by malice, or 'overborne by power; lift it up from 'the dust, and let it shine conspicuous 'to the world.'

'Glorious task!' cried Cozro; 'hap-'py am I in being the chosen instrument 'of Nourjahad's bounty; and still more 'happy shall he be in seeing the ac-'complishment of his good designs.'

'We must not stop here,' said Nour-jahad; 'I will have hospitals built for 'the reception of the aged and the sick; 'and my tables shall be spread for the re-'freshment of the weary traveller. No 'virtuous action shall pass by me unre-'warded; and no breach of the laws of 'temperance, justice, or mercy, shall 'escape unreproved. My own example, 'so far as it can influence, shall hence-'forth countenance the one, and dis-'courage the other.'

'Blessed be the purpose of thy heart,' said Cozro, 'and prosperous be the days 'of thy life!'

Nourjahad now found the anxiety under which he had but a little before laboured, exceedingly relieved. 'My 'mind,' said he, 'is much more at 'ease than it was: let us not delay to

'put

'put our design in execution. I will 'lead you to the place where my treasure is concealed, which I never yet 'discovered to any one.' Saying this, he took Cozro by the hand, and conducted him to the cave.

'Thou seest here,' said he, 'riches 'which can never be exhausted; thou 'mayest perceive that I have not yet 'sunk a third part of one of these urns 'which contain my wealth; yet have I 'with monstrous profusion lavished 'away immense sums. Five more such 'urns as these are yet untouched. 'Those six, which thou seest on the 'right hand, contain wedges of the finest 'gold, which must be equal in value to 'the others. These six, which are 'ranged on the left, are filled with precious stones, whose worth must be inestimable: the wealth of Ormuz would 'not purchase a single handful. Judge, 'then, my friend, if I need be sparing 'in my liberality.'

Cozro expressed his astonishment at the sight of these wonders. 'If thou 'wouldst be advised by me,' said he, 'thou wouldst secretly remove from 'Ormuz, and carry thy treasures with 'thee. Thou mayest deposit part of 'them in each of the different countries 'through which thou passest in thy progress all over the earth. By this means 'thou mayest have it in thy power to 'distribute with more ease thy bounty 'wherever thou goest; and be always 'provided with riches in what part soever of the world thou shalt chuse for 'a time to take up thy residence. Thy 'long abode in this city will draw observations on thee sooner or later; and 'thy person's not having undergone 'any change from length of time, will 'bring on thee the suspicion of magick; 'for tradition will not fail to inform 'posterity of thy strange history.'

'You counsel well,' replied Nourjahad: 'as I am now at liberty, I will 'retire from Ormuz. You, my dear 'Cozro, shall accompany me; your 'prudent counsel shall be my guide; 'and when I shall be deprived of you 'by death, I will still endeavour to follow your wise precepts.

'Come,' continued he, 'I am in 'haste to enter on my new course of 'life; let us both go into the city, and 'try to find out proper objects on which 'to exert our charity. I shall pass without observation, and unknown, as 'few of my cotemporaries can now be 'living; and I will not leave the country which gave me birth, without first 'making it feel the effects of that beneficence which thou hast awakened in 'my heart.'

'Deserving of praise as thou art,' said Cozro, 'thou, for the present, must 'suppress thy ardour to do good; for 'though, by the death of Schemzeddin, 'thou art no longer a prisoner, thou art 'not nevertheless yet at liberty to leave 'thy house.'—'Why not?' answered Nourjahad: 'Who is there now to prevent me?'

'The young sultan,' replied Cozro, 'deeply afflicted for the death of his 'father, and, out of a pious regard for 'his memory, has given strict commandment that all his subjects should 'observe a solemn mourning for him 'during the space of twenty days; in 'which time all the shops and places of 'publick resort (except the mosques) are 'to be shut up, and no business of any 'kind transacted; nor are any persons to 'be seen in the streets, excepting those 'who visit the sick, and the slaves who 'must necessarily be employed to carry 'provisions, on pain of the sultan's heavy displeasure.

'This edict was published yesterday, 'and the people of Ormuz all love the 'memory of Schemzeddin, and the person of their present sultan, too well, 'not to pay an exact obedience to it.'

'If so,' said Nourjahad, 'I will not 'by my example encourage others to 'infringe their duty; yet, as the relieving of the poor is in itself meritorious, 'I would not wish to be withheld from 'doing it so long as twenty days. How 'many virtuous people may be, during 'that time, pining for want! more 'especially as this prohibition must cut 'off all intercourse between man and 'man, and deprive many poor wretches 'of the charitable succour they might 'otherwise receive. I think therefore 'that thou, Cozro, in thy slave's habit, 'mayest go forth unsuspected; and by 'privately seeking out, and alleviating 'the miseries of our fellow citizens, do 'an act of more real benefit than can result from the strictest conformity to 'this pageant of sorrow, which many 'in their hearts, I am sure, must condemn.'

Cozro approving of these sentiments, readily agreed to the expedient; and, taking

taking a large purſe of gold with him to diſtribute as occaſion might ſerve, immediately ſet out, in order to execute his lord's commands.

Nourjahad now entered on a total reformation in his way of living. He roſe at day-break, and ſpent the morning in ſtudy or meditation. Luxury and intemperance were baniſhed from his board; his table was ſpread with the plaineſt diſhes, and he wholly abſtained from exceſs in wine. His ſlumbers were ſweet, and he found his health more vigorous.

'I will no more,' ſaid he, 'enſlave 'myſelf to the power of beauty. I have 'lived to ſee the decay of a whole ſe'raglio of the faireſt faces in Perſia, 'and have ſighed for the ingratitude of 'the next generation that ſucceeded 'them. I will not then ſeek out for 'thoſe deſtroyers of my quiet, for whoſe 'death or infidelity I muſt for ever 'complain. Mandana was the only wo'man who ever really deſerved my love; 'could I recal her from the grave, and 'endue her with the ſame privilege of 'which I am myſelf poſſeſſed, I would 'confine myſelf to her arms alone; but, 'ſince that is impoſſible, I will devote 'myſelf to the charms of virtue, which 'of all things ſhe moſt reſembled.'

While Nourjahad was thus reſolving to correct the errors of his paſt life, his virtue was not merely in ſpeculation. He never laid him down to reſt without the ſatisfaction of having made ſome one the better for him. Cozro, who conſtantly ſpent the day in enquiring out and relieving the diſtreſſed, failed not to return every night to give an account of his charitable miſſion, and to infuſe into his maſter's boſom the (till now unfelt) joy which ſprings from righteous deeds.

The heart of Nourjahad was expanded, and glowed with compaſſion for thoſe ſufferings which Cozro feelingly deſcribed as the lot of ſo many of his fellow-creatures. As charity and benevolence roſe in his breaſt, he found his pride ſubſide. He was conſcious of his own unworthineſs. He kneeled, he prayed, he humbled himſelf before the Almighty, and returned thanks to God for enabling him to ſuccour the unfortunate.

In this happy frame of mind he continued for eighteen days; there wanted but two more to the expiration of the mourning for the ſultan, when Nourjahad was to be at full liberty to purſue in his own perſon the dictates of his reformed, and now truly generous and benevolent heart.

He was ſitting alone in his apartment, waiting the arrival of Cozro, in the pleaſing expectation of receiving ſome freſh opportunity of doing good. The hour of his uſual return was already paſt, and Nourjahad began to fear ſome accident had happened to him; but he little knew that a black cloud hung over him, which was ready to pour down all it's malignity on his own head.

As he muſed on what might be the occaſion of Cozro's long ſtay, he heard a loud knocking at his door. It was immediately opened by one of his ſlaves; and a man, who by his habit he knew to be one of the cady's officers, rudely entered his chamber.

'How comes it,' ſaid the ſtranger, 'that thou haſt had the temerity, in con'tempt of our ſovereign lord's com'mands, to employ thy emiſſary about 'the city at a time when thou knoweſt 'that ſo ſtrict an injunction has been laid 'on all people to keep within their houſes, 'none being permitted to ſtir abroad but 'for the abſolute neceſſities of life, or 'in caſes of imminent danger?'

'Far be it from me,' replied Nourjahad, 'to diſobey our mighty ſultan's 'orders; but I underſtood that ſlaves 'had permiſſion to go unqueſtioned on 'their maſter's buſineſs.'—'And what 'buſineſs,' anſwered the man, 'can thy 'ſlave have from morning to night in 'ſo many different quarters of the city?'

Nourjahad, who did not care to be himſelf the trumpeter of his own good deeds, heſitated to give an anſwer.

'Ha, ha,' cried the ſtranger, 'I ſee 'plainly there is ſomething dangerous 'in thy myſtery, and that the money 'which thy ſlave has been diſtributing 'among ſuch a variety of people, is for 'a purpoſe very different from that 'which he pretends. A likely matter 'it is, indeed, that a private man ſhould 'beſtow in charity ſuch ſums as Cozro 'acknowledges he has within theſe few 'days diſtributed!'

'Yet nothing is more certain,' replied Nourjahad, 'than that Cozro has 'ſpoke the truth.'—'We ſhall ſee that,' replied the officer, in a tone of inſolence; 'Cozro is already in priſon, and my or'ders are to conduct thee to him.'

Nour-

Nourjahad, exceedingly troubled at hearing this, replied, he was ready to go with him; and the officer led him out of his houſe.

It was now late at night; they paſſed along the ſtreets without meeting any one, and ſoon reached the place wherein Cozro was confined. It was the priſon wherein ſuch perſons were ſhut up as were accuſed of treaſon againſt the ſtate.

Here he found the unfortunate Cozro in a dungeon. 'Alas!' cried he, as ſoon as his maſter entered, 'why do I 'ſee thee here?'—'Say rather, my dear 'Cozro,' replied Nourjahad, 'what 'ſtrange fatality has brought *thee* to this 'diſmal place?'

'I can give no other account,' anſwered Cozro, 'but that, in returning 'home this night, I was ſeized on in 'the ſtreet by ſome of thoſe ſoldiers 'who were employed to patrol about 'the city, to ſee that the ſultan's orders 'were punctually obſerved; and, being 'queſtioned concerning my buſineſs, I 'told them, that I had been relieving 'the wants of indigent people, and ſav-'ing, even from periſhing, ſome poor 'wretches who had not wherewithal to 'buy food.'

"That is an idle errand," replied one 'of them, "and might have been deferred "till the term of mourning was expired: "however, if you will give me a piece "of gold, I will let you paſs for this "time; otherwiſe, both you and your "employer may happen to repent of hav-"ing tranſgreſſed the ſultan's com-"mands." I made no ſcruple,' purſued Cozro, 'to take out my purſe, in 'which there were ten ſequins left. I 'gave one of them to the ſoldier, but 'the rapacious wretches ſeeing I had 'more money, were not content with 'this, but inſiſted on my giving the 'whole among them. I refuſed; ſome 'angry words enſued; one of the miſ-'creants ſtruck me, and I returned the 'blow. Enraged at this, they hurried 'me before the cady, to whom they ac-'cuſed me of having diſobeyed the edict, 'and aſſaulted the ſultan's officers in the 'diſcharge of their duty. I was not 'heard in my defence, having four wit-'neſſes againſt me, but was immedi-'ately dragged to this horrid priſon; 'and the ſultan himſelf, they ſay, is to 'take cognizance of my offence.'

'Oh, Heaven!' cried Nourjahad, 'to 'what miſchiefs does not the love of 'gold expoſe us! See, my friend, into 'what misfortunes thou art plunged by 'the ſordid avarice of thoſe vile ſol-'diers! But why, why didſt thou heſitate 'to give up that paltry ſum which thou 'hadſt in thy purſe, to obtain thy li-'berty?'—'I do not repent what I have 'done,' anſwered Cozro; 'and ſhall 'contentedly ſuffer the penalty I have 'incurred, ſince it was in ſo good a 'cauſe.'

'If the ſultan is juſt,' replied Nourjahad, 'the puniſhment ought only to 'fall on me, who alone am guilty, ſince 'what thou didſt was by my command.'

Here the officer who had conducted Nourjahad to priſon, and who was preſent at this diſcourſe, interpoſed, and addreſſing himſelf to Nourjahad—'Thou 'haſt not as yet been accuſed to the 'ſultan,' ſaid he; 'and it is not too 'late to extricate even thy ſlave from 'this troubleſome affair; it is but mak-'ing a handſome preſent to the cady, 'and I will undertake this matter will 'go no farther.'—'I am willing to do 'ſo,' replied Nourjahad, eagerly; 'name 'your demand, and you ſhall have 'it. Provided I am allowed to go 'home to my own houſe, I will fetch the 'money; and, if you are afraid of my 'eſcaping, you yourſelf may bear me 'company.'

'I will not conſent to it,' replied Cozro; 'neither liberty nor life are 'worth purchaſing on baſe conditions. 'I will ſubmit my cauſe to Schemerzad's 'juſtice, the cauſe of uprightneſs and 'truth; my own innocence ſhall be my 'ſupport; and I will dare the worſt that 'fraud and malice can ſuggeſt againſt 'me.'

In vain did Nourjahad urge him to accept the proffered terms; he remained inflexible to all the arguments he could uſe to perſuade him; wherefore, finding him determined, he was obliged to deſiſt; and Cozro, after paſſing the remainder of the night in quiet and profound ſleep, though without any other bed than the bare earth, was at dawn of day called forth to appear before the ſultan.

The reflections Nourjahad made on the reſolute behaviour of Cozro, ſerved not a little to fortify his mind. 'How 'noble muſt this man's ſoul be,' ſaid he, 'which ſets him thus above the 'reach of adverſity? and with what 'contempt he looks down on the glo-'rious

'rious prospects he has before him, 'when put in the balance with his in- 'tegrity! Surely, it is not in this life 'he places his happiness, since he is so 'ready to forego the pleasures he might 'enjoy with me, in that participation of 'wealth and liberty which I have pro- 'mised him. How superior is my ser- 'vant to me, who, but for his example, 'should now sink under my fears; but 'he has resources which I have not. 'Alas! why did I barter my hopes of 'paradise for the vain, the transitory, 'the fallacious joys which this vile 'world bestows! Already I have tried 'them; what do they inspire but satiety 'and disgust? I never experienced true 'contentment, but during the time, 'short as it is, since I abjured those fol- 'lies in which I once delighted: and I 'am now persuaded that, after having 'passed a few, a very few years more, in 'the enjoyment of such gratifications as 'I have not yet had an opportunity of 'tasting, that I shall grow even weary 'of the light, and wish to be dismissed 'to that place where we are told no sor- 'rows can approach.'

Nourjahad was buried in these re- flections, when he was roused by the re- turn of Cozro. The glimmering light which a lamp afforded, struck full on the face of his friend, (for he no longer considered him as a servant) and he re- joiced to see Cozro's chearful counte- nance, by which he judged that he had nothing to fear.

'I am come,' said Cozro, approach- ing Nourjahad, and kissing his hand, 'to bid thee adieu, for from this day 'we are to be for ever divided! It is 'that thought only which makes our 'separation grievous. Had I hopes of 'ever beholding thy face in the mansions 'of light, I should go to death with the 'same alacrity with which I close my 'eyes in slumber.'

'Good Heaven!' cried Nourjahad, 'dost thou talk of death? Can it be, 'is it possible that thy life is in danger?'

'What is the life, about which thou 'art anxious?' replied Cozro; 'our be- 'ing here is but a shadow; that only is 'real existence which the blessed enjoy 'after their short travel here. And 'know, O Nourjahad, I would not 'yield up my expectations of the hum- 'blest place in paradise for the sovereign 'rule of the whole earth, though my 'days were to be extended to the date of 'thy life, and every wish of my soul 'gratified to the utmost. Think, then, 'with how little reluctance I shall leave 'a world, wherein I am sure of meeting 'nothing but oppression, treachery, and 'disappointment; where mercy is con- 'strued into treason, and charity is called 'sedition!'

'And art thou then doomed to die?' said Nourjahad, pale and trembling at the thought, though convinced it was a pre- dicament in which he could never stand.

'I am,' answered Cozro; 'my offence 'was found capital. Disobedience to 'the sultan's edict alone, incurred a 'heavy punishment; but my crime was, 'by the malice of my accusers, so highly 'aggravated, that the penalty became 'death. They charged me with hav- 'ing distributed money for evil purposes, 'among persons disaffected to the state, 'and with having beat and abused those 'officers who first detected me. In vain 'did I offer all the pleas that truth could 'suggest; my enemies, exasperated at 'losing the sum which they hoped to 'have extorted from you, swore to the 'facts of which I was accused, and the 'rigid sultan condemned me to death. 'What thy fate is to be, I know not; 'but since it is thy misfortune to be 'doomed to perpetual life, better pur- 'chase thy freedom on any terms, than 'be condemned to languish for years in 'a prison, for such probably will be thy 'lot.'

'O that I could die with thee!' said Nourjahad, 'miserable that I am, thus 'to be deprived of thy counsel and friend- 'ship, at a time when I so much stood 'in need of them. But wherefore, my 'friend, why should we submit to the 'tyranny of the sultan? though thou art 'condemned, there may yet be found 'means to deliver thee. The keeper of 'the prison will gladly set a price on thy 'liberty; a hundred thousand pieces of 'gold shall be thy ransom; and I shall 'think myself rich by the purchase!'— 'And what is to become of thee?' re- plied Cozro. 'I will buy my own 'freedom at the same rate,' answered Nourjahad, 'and we will both fly from 'Ormuz together.'—'And leave your 'treasures behind you?' cried Cozro, 'for it will be impossible to convey from 'hence such a vast mass of riches with- 'out discovery.'

'I value them no longer,' said Nourjahad; 'they can never yield me any 'permanent enjoyment. The saving 'thy life is the only good turn I now 'expect from them. That once accomplished, I shall desire to retain no more 'of them than what will support me 'above want, and I will leave the rest 'to be for ever hid in the bosom of the 'earth, where they now lie, that they 'may never more become a snare to 'others as they have been to me.'

'Praised be our holy prophet,' said Cozro, 'that has at length endued the 'heart of Nourjahad with wisdom. Pursue the purposes of thy soul; effect thy 'own freedom as soon as possible, since 'no comfort can visit thee in the gloom 'of this frightful prison; but tempt 'not Cozro back to a life which he despises. I tell thee again, there is nothing in this world to be put in competition with the glories I have in prospect in that state to which I am now 'hastening. Why, then, Nourjahad, 'wouldst thou retard my felicity, or wish 'me to hazard, for the sake of delusive 'pleasures, those transcendent joys which 'await the virtuous?'

The energy with which Cozro delivered himself, pierced Nourjahad to the inmost soul. A holy ardour was kindled in his breast, which he had never felt before; he found his faculties enlarged, his mind was transported above this world; he felt as it were unimbodied, and an involuntary adjuration burst from his lips. 'Oh, holy prophet,' said he, 'take, 'take back the gift, that I in the ignorance and presumption of my heart so 'vainly sought, and which too late I 'find a punishment instead of a blessing! 'I contemn riches, and for ever cast them 'from me: suffer me then to yield up 'my life; for there can be no true happiness but in beholding thee, O Mahomet, face to face, in the never-fading 'fields of paradise!'

Saying this, he prostrated himself on the ground, and continued for some time in mental prayer.

Cozro observed an awful silence while he continued in this posture. When Nourjahad arose from the earth—'May 'our great prophet,' said Cozro, 'hear 'your prayers; and, were he even now 'to grant them, all the favours he has 'already bestowed on you would be 'poor and contemptible to this last best 'boon. Farewel,' said he, 'I must 'now leave thee, I was only permitted 'to come and bid thee adieu. May the 'Supreme grant thy petition, then shall 'we again meet in the mansions of happy spirits.' Nourjahad embraced him, and Cozro withdrew.

Being now left at liberty to his own thoughts, he made bitter reflections on the strangeness of his fate. 'Fool, fool 'that I was,' cried he aloud, beating his breast, 'to prefer so rash, so impious 'a petition to the prophet, as to desire 'the everlasting laws of nature to be 'overturned, to gratify my mad luxurious wishes. I thought the life of 'man too short for the enjoyment of 'those various and unbounded pleasures 'which wealth could procure; but it is 'long since I have found my error. 'Well did my guardian Spirit say, I 'should repent of the gift I had implored when it should be too late. I do 'indeed repent; but, O thou benign intelligence, if thou hast remaining any 'favour for thy inconsiderate unhappy 'charge, descend once more to my relief, and, if possible, restore me to that 'state for which I was designed by my 'Creator; a poor mortal, liable to, and 'now longing for the friendly stroke of 'death.'

He had scarce pronounced these words, when his prison doors flew open; a refulgent light flashed in, which illuminated the whole dungeon, and he beheld his guardian Genius standing before him, exactly as he had appeared to him before. 'Thy prayers are heard,' said he, 'O son of frailty! and thy penitence is 'accepted in the sight of the Most High. 'I am sent down again by our prophet 'to re-assume that gift which thou art 'now satisfied must make thee miserable. Yet examine thy heart once 'more before I pronounce thy irrevocable doom; say, art thou willing to 'become subject to the common lot of 'mortals?'

'Most willing,' replied Nourjahad; 'yet I wonder not, my seraphic Guide, 'that thou shouldst doubt the stability 'of my mind; but in this last purpose of 'it, I am sure I shall remain unshaken.'

'If so,' replied the shining vision, 'thy 'guardian Angel consigns thee to the 'arms of death, with much more joy than 'he conferred on thee riches and immortality. Thou hast nothing more to do, 'than to prostrate thyself with thy face 'to the earth. Remain this evening in 'fervent

'fervent prayer, and await what ſhall 'befal thee to-morrow.'

Nourjahad made no reply, but falling with his face to the ground, he ſoon found the dungeon reſtored to it's former gloom, the light and the guardian Spirit vaniſhing together in an inſtant.

He continued in devout prayer till night; when the keeper of the priſon entered his dungeon to bring him ſome refreſhment.

'The ſultan,' ſaid he, 'purpoſes to 'examine you to-morrow, and much I 'fear you will have as rigorous a ſen'tence paſſed on you as that which has 'been already executed on Cozro.'—'Is he then dead?' cried Nourjahad, mournfully. 'He is,' replied the keeper; 'it is but an hour ſince I ſaw 'him deprived of breath; but he received 'the blow with ſuch an heroick firm'neſs, that thou wouldſt have thought 'he rather enjoyed a triumph than ſuf'fered an ignominious death.'

'Happy, happy Cozro!' cried Nourjahad; 'thou art now beyond the reach 'of misfortune; while I, perhaps, may 'be doomed to ſuſtain for years a wretch'ed life.'

'Thy life,' ſaid the keeper, 'may 'be nearer a period than thou art aware 'of. The ſultan is covetous, and ſur'rounded by needy favourites, whom 'the report of your immenſe wealth has 'made eager for your deſtruction; for 'you cannot be ignorant, that ſhould 'you die, involved as it is ſaid you are 'in Cozro's guilt, your treaſures would 'be confiſcated to the ſultan. From 'this circumſtance I have heard it whiſ'pered, your head is already devoted; 'and this, perhaps, was the true cauſe 'of Cozro's death, and will give the 'better colour to yours. It is not, 'however,' added he, 'even yet too 'late to prevent the danger; had not 'your ſlave been obſtinate, he might 'now have been alive, and out of the 'reach of harm. You have the ſame 'means of preſervation, in regard to your 'own perſon, ſtill in your power; and, 'if you will make it worth my while to 'run the riſque, I will this night ſet you 'at liberty.'

'And doſt thou think,' ſaid Nourjahad, 'that I have profited ſo little by the ex'ample of my noble friend, as to accept 'of thy offer, ſordid and treacherous as 'thou art? If thou art baſe enough to 'betray thy truſt for gold, know that 'the mind of Nourjahad is above re'ceiving a favour from ſuch a wretch. 'As for my wealth, let the ſultan take 'it; my only wiſh is to part with that 'and my life alſo.'

'That wiſh may ſpeedily be accom'pliſhed,' ſaid the keeper, in an angry tone; 'and to-morrow, perhaps, you 'may repent of your folly, when you 'find yourſelf condemned to follow your 'noble friend to the other world.' Nourjahad made no reply, and the keeper ſullenly departed.

Nourjahad ſpent the night in prayers and meditation; he found peace and tranquillity reſtored to his breaſt; and, perfectly reſigned to the will of the prophet, he waited the event of the next day with the utmoſt compoſure.

In the morning the keeper of the priſon entered to him. 'Follow me,' ſaid he; 'thou art going to appear before the 'ſultan, who himſelf is to be thy judge; 'a rigorous one thou wilt find him; but 'thy folly be on thy own head, who didſt 'proudly refuſe the proffer I made thee 'of liberty and life.'

'Lead on,' ſaid Nourjahad; 'it is not 'for ſuch men as thou art to cenſure a 'conduct of which thou doſt not know 'the motive.'

He was now carried out of the dungeon, and ordered to aſcend a chariot, in which the captain of the ſultan's guards was already placed, to receive his priſoner. The chariot was ſurrounded by ſoldiers; and in this manner he was conducted to the preſence of the ſultan.

Schemerzad was ſeated on a throne, in the hall of his palace, wherein he was uſed to diſtribute juſtice. The emirs, and great officers of his court, were ſtanding round him.

Nourjahad ſtood before him with his eyes bent to the ground; and, however awed he might be at the preſence of his royal maſter, and the auguſt aſſembly which ſurrounded him, yet the dignity of conſcious innocence, and the perfect reliance he had on the Supreme Judge of *his* judge, rendered him ſuperior to every thing. His deportment was modeſt and reſpectful, yet did he diſcover no ſymptom of fear.

The ſultan made a ſign for every one preſent to withdraw, but one perſon who ſtood on the lower ſtep of his throne, and whom Nourjahad judged to be his prime viſier.

'What haſt thou to ſay, preſumptuous man,' ſaid Schemerzad, in a ſtern voice; 'what excuſe canſt thou offer for daring, in contempt of my edict, to employ thy agent, during the time ſet apart for mourning, in going about the city from day to day; oſtentatiouſly diſplaying thy ill-timed liberality amongſt my ſubjects; endeavouring, as I am informed, to conciliate their affections, for purpoſes dangerous to me, and the ſafety of my crown? What haſt thou to offer in anſwer to this charge?'

Nourjahad proſtrated himſelf to the ground. 'Mighty ſultan,' ſaid he, 'I have nothing to offer in extenuation of my fault, with regard to the firſt part of the charge. I acknowledge that I diſtributed money among your majeſty's ſubjects, and that at a time too when every act but thoſe of abſolute neceſſity was interdicted. I offer not to palliate this breach of my duty.'

'Audacious wretch,' interrupted the ſultan, 'to what end was thy profuſion employed?'

'To obtain a bleſſing from Heaven,' anſwered Nourjahad; 'and, by relieving the wants and afflictions of others, to make ſome atonement for my own riotous and intemperate abuſe of that wealth which ought to have been employed to better purpoſes.'

'Wouldſt thou perſuade me, then,' cried Schemerzad, 'that charity was thy motive!'—'It was, illuſtrious ſultan,' replied Nourjahad: 'I have ſpoke the truth; and, to convince your majeſty that I have no ſiniſter deſigns againſt the ever-ſacred perſon of my ſovereign, I will now voluntarily yield up that treaſure to thee, which, had I been vile enough to have ſo employed, would have bought the fidelity of more than half thy ſubjects, though every man of them had ſtood near the heart and throne of Schemerzad.'

The undaunted manner in which Nourjahad ſpoke theſe words, made Schemerzad ſhake on his imperial ſeat; but quickly re-aſſuming the majeſty of his ſtation—'Do, then, as thou haſt ſpoken,' ſaid he, 'and I will believe thee.'

'If your majeſty will permit me,' ſaid Nourjahad, 'to go to my houſe, and will ſend a proper perſon with me, I will deliver up into his hands all my wealth, requeſting no more than will ſupply my wants ſo long as Heaven permits me to live.'

'I will not truſt thee out of my ſight,' ſaid Schemerzad; 'thou mayeſt as well inſtruct ſome one in my preſence where to find the riches of which I hear thou art poſſeſſed, and I will ſend for them.'

Nourjahad then informed the ſultan of the ſubterraneous cave in his garden; and delivering him the key, told him he would there find all the wealth of which he was maſter.

Schemerzad immediately diſpatched his viſier, ordering him to have the riches he ſhould find immediately conveyed to his treaſury. He then commanded Nourjahad to retire into a ſaloon, that was ſeparated from the hall only by a curtain, and there wait the return of the viſier; before whom the ſultan ſaid he had ſome farther queſtions to put to him.

As the gardens of Nourjahad joined to thoſe belonging to the royal palace, the viſier was not long in going and returning. Nourjahad heard him talk to Schemerzad, and ſtraight he was called on to come forth, and ſtand before the ſultan: but Schemerzad now accoſted him in a voice like thunder. 'Perfidious and inſolent ſlave,' ſaid he, 'art thou not afraid of inſtant death falling on thee, for daring thus to falſify before thy ſovereign lord and maſter? Say, before thou art cut off by torture from the face of the earth, where thou haſt concealed thy wealth; for well thou knoweſt, there is nothing contained in that cave which thou pretendeſt with ſo much care to lock up.'

'Nothing!' replied Nourjahad, in amazement. 'By the head of our prophet, when I laſt was there, it contained more than would purchaſe thy whole empire a thouſand times over. It was but the very day on which I was dragged to priſon, that I ſaw it; the key has never ſince been out of my pocket; who then could poſſibly have conveyed away my treaſure?'

As Nourjahad applied himſelf to the viſier while he ſpoke, that miniſter, thinking himſelf reflected on by his words, replied ſcornfully—'Thou thinkeſt perhaps it is I who have robbed thee, and that I have framed this ſtory to deceive the ſultan, and ruin thee.'—'I do not ſay ſo,' anſwered Nourjahad;

Nourjahad; 'but this I am sure of, that 'no human being but thyself knew 'where to find my treasure.'—'Some 'dæmon, perhaps,' replied the vizier, with an air of contempt, 'has removed 'it thence.'

Nourjahad now recollecting suddenly, that his guardian Spirit had probably reclaimed this, as well as the other gift, replied coolly—'It is not at all unlike-'ly; a certain Genius, who watches 'over my motions, has undoubtedly 'carried away my wealth.'

'Do not think,' said the sultan, 'that affecting to be out of thy senses 'shall preserve thee from my wrath.'

'Your majesty,' said the vizier, 'had 'best order that his head be instantly 'struck off, for daring to impose on 'your credulity, and abuse your cle-'mency in suffering him to out-live that 'slave who obstinately persisted in re-'fusing to discover his master's riches.'

'Did Cozro do so?' cried Nourjahad. 'He did,' answered the vizier; 'but we 'will see whether thou wilt persevere in 'the denial, and to the latest minute 'of thy life preserve the firmness of thy 'slave.'

'And who is it that thou callest a 'slave, thou minister of cruelty?' said Nourjahad boldly. 'The soul of Cozro 'raised him infinitely more above thee, 'than the rank of the sultan of Persia 'lifts him above the meanest of his sub-'jects.—My lord,' pursued he, throwing himself at Schemerzad's feet, 'I 'have no other plea to offer for my life; 'I call Heaven to witness I have spoken 'nothing but the truth; the severest tor-'tures you can inflict on me will ex-'tort no more. I was willing to make 'a voluntary sacrifice of my riches: I 'am now as ready to yield my life.'

'Art thou not then afraid to die?' said Schemerzad.

'No, mighty sultan,' answered Nourjahad; 'I look upon death, to a virtu-'ous man, as the greatest good the 'Almighty can bestow!'

The sultan, instead of making any reply, clapped his hands; and Nourjahad supposing it was a signal to have him seized and carried to execution, rose up, and stood with an intrepidity in his looks that shewed how little he was affected with the near prospect of death.

But instead of the slaves whom he expected to see coming to lay hold on him, he beheld, standing close to the throne of Schemerzad, his guardian Genius, just in the same celestial form in which he had twice before appeared to him!

Awed and amazed, Nourjahad started back, and gazed at the heavenly vision. Not daring to trust his senses, he remained mute and motionless for some minutes; but he was rouzed from his deep attention by a loud burst of laughter, which broke at once from the sultan, the vizier, and the guardian Genius.

This new and extraordinary incident threw Nourjahad into fresh astonishment; when, without giving him time to recover himself, the angelic youth, snatching from his head a circlet of flowers intermixed with precious stones, which encompassed his brows, and shaded a great part of his forehead; and at the same time throwing off a head of artificial hair which flowed in golden ringlets down his shoulders; a fine fall of brown hair, which was concealed under it, succeeded, dropping in light curls on his neck and blushing cheeks; and Nourjahad, in the person of his seraphic Guide, discovered his beloved and beautiful Mandana!

Whatever transports the sight of her would at another time have inspired in the breast of Nourjahad, his faculties were now too much absorbed in wonder to leave room for any other passion. Wherefore, not daring to approach her, the sultan, willing to put an end to his suspence, cried out—'Look up, Nour-'jahad, raise thy eyes to thy master's 'face, no longer the angry Schemer-'zad, thy offended prince, but the real 'Schemzeddin, thy friend and kind 'protector.'

Nourjahad, who before, out of respect and awful distance, had not ventured to look in the sultan's face, now fixed his eyes earnestly upon him. 'By 'the life of Schemerzad,' said he, 'if I 'were not certain that all this is illu-'sion, and that thy illustrious father, 'my royal and once beloved master, is 'dead, thou art so very like him, that 'I should swear that thou wert the real 'sultan Schemzeddin himself; such, at 'thy years, was his countenance and 'features.'

The sultan at this burst into a second fit of laughter. 'And for whom,' said the vizier, who had by this time taken

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off his turban, and a falſe beard which he wore, 'for whom wouldſt thou take 'me?'

'By Mahomet,' cried Nourjahad, falling back a ſtep or two, 'I ſhould 'take thee for my old friend Haſem, if 'I were not convinced that the good 'man died above twenty years ago.'

'It is time,' ſaid the ſultan, deſcending from his throne, and taking Nourjahad by the hand, 'it is now time 'to undeceive thee, and explain to thee 'the myſtery of all thoſe extraordinary 'events which ſeem to have bewildered 'thy ſenſes.

'Know, then, Nourjahad, that the 'adventure of thy guardian Genius was 'all a deception, and a piece of machi-'nery of my contrivance. You are 'now convinced, by the evidence of 'your own eyes, that your celeſtial in-'telligence was no other than this young 'damſel.

'I had a mind to make trial of thy 'heart; and, for this purpoſe, made 'choice of this charming virgin, for 'whom I own I had entertained a paſ-'ſion, but found I could not gain her 'affections. She had ſeen you, from 'the windows of the womens apart-'ments, walking with me in the gar-'dens of the ſeraglio, and had conceived 'a tenderneſs for you, which ſhe frankly 'confeſſed to me, declaring at the ſame 'time, ſhe would never give her love 'to any other. Though ſhe was my 'ſlave, I would not put a conſtraint 'upon her inclinations; but told her, 'if ſhe would aſſiſt me faithfully in a 'deſign I had formed, I would reward 'her by beſtowing her on you.

'She readily aſſented to my propoſal; 'and, having previouſly prepared every 'thing for my purpoſe, I equipped her 'as you ſee.

'It was not difficult for me to intro-'duce her into your chamber, by a pri-'vate door, which you know commu-'nicates between your apartments and 'certain lodgings in my palace.

'I myſelf ſtood at the door, while 'ſhe entered as you ſlept, and contrived 'to throw that light into your chamber 'which diſcloſed to you the wonderful 'viſion. I overheard all your diſcourſe, 'and could ſcarce contain my laughter, 'when you ſo greedily received that 'marvellous eſſence from Mandana, 'which you ſuppoſed would confer im-'mortality; but which was in reality 'nothing more than a ſoporifick drug, of 'ſo potent a nature, that the fumes of 'it alone were capable of throwing the 'perſon who ſmelt to them into a pro-'found ſleep. It had quickly this ef-'fect on you; and I took that oppor-'tunity of conveying into your chamber 'thoſe coffers which you thought con-'tained ſuch immenſe treaſures, but 'which in truth were as great counter-'feits as your guardian Angel. The 'ſuppoſed precious ſtones were nothing 'more than falſe gems, which I pro-'cured from a ſkilful lapidary, who had 'given them ſuch an extraordinary po-'liſh and luſtre, that they might well 'paſs for jewels of ineſtimable value, on 'one better ſkilled in thoſe matters than 'you were.

'The ingots of gold were all baſe 'metal, which I got from the ſame artiſt. 'Nothing, in ſhort, was real, but the 'money, part of which I was very wil-'ling to ſacrifice to my experiment; 'though, as I have managed it, the 'largeſt ſums which thou in thy extra-'vagance haſt expended, were returned 'into my coffers.

'As I naturally ſuppoſed, that ſo long 'as the money laſted you would not have 'recourſe to the other treaſures, I was 'not afraid of having the fraud detected. 'The cave, which was an accidental 'circumſtance, but of which I had long 'known, was by my contrivance made 'the repoſitory of thy riches.

'When thou wert ſettled in the full 'poſſeſſion of thy imaginary felicity, 'thou mayeſt remember that Haſem was 'firſt recommended to thy ſervice; Man-'dana too was, among other ſlaves, pre-'ſented to thy view. No wonder that 'her charms captivated thy heart. Her 'love to thee was as pure as it was fer-'vent: but thy boundleſs wiſhes were 'not to be reſtrained; and, forgetting all 'the rational principles that thou didſt 'at firſt lay down to regulate thy con-'duct, thou gaveſt thyſelf up to all man-'ner of vile exceſſes, and didſt ſhew the 'depravity of the human heart when 'unreſtrained by divine laws.

'It was now time, I thought, to pu-'niſh thee, and to ſhew thee the vanity 'of all earthly enjoyments. By opiates 'infuſed into thy wine that night on 'which thou didſt debaſe thyſelf by 'drunkenneſs, I threw thee into a ſound 'ſleep; and though it laſted not much 'longer than the uſual term of ordinary

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'repose, it yet gave me an opportunity 'of making such farther dispositions as 'I thought necessary for the carrying on 'of my design.

'I laid hold of this juncture to with-'draw Mandana from thy arms, pro-'mising, however, to restore her to thee 'if I found thee ever worthy of her.

'I believe it is needless to inform you, 'that the confinement I laid you under 'was for no other end than to cut off 'all intercourse between you and any 'others than those of your own household, 'every one of whom were of my placing 'about you, even to the ladies of your 'seraglio, who were no others than the 'prettiest slaves I could find among 'those who attended on my own wo-'men.

'Every one entrusted with my secret 'was tied down by the most solemn 'oaths to keep it inviolably; and this, 'with a promise of reward, served, as 'the event has shewn, to secure their 'fidelity.

'There was not an action of thy life 'but I was made acquainted with; and 'while thou didst triumph in the joys 'of my successful illusion, I sometimes 'pitied thy weakness, and sometimes 'laughed at thy extravagance.

'That magnificent palace of which 'thou thoughtest thyself master, was one 'which I had borrowed for the purpose 'from an emir who was in my secret, 'and who was himself often present in 'disguise among your slaves, a witness 'to your extravagancies. I will not 'encrease thy confusion by reminding 'thee of the inordinate excesses thou 'wert guilty of in thy retirement. Thou 'canst not have forgot the project of 'creating for thyself an earthly paradise. 'This was the second crisis I laid hold 'on to punish thee; and, by tearing thee 'from thy impious pleasures, to remind 'thee that crimes cannot be committed 'with impunity. A second sleep, pro-'cured as the former was, but of some-'what a longer duration, gave me full 'opportunity to make a total change in 'the face of thy affairs. Hasem (whom 'thou didst suppose to be dead) re-'mained still secretly concealed in thy 'house, to be as it were the grand spring 'to move all the rest of thy domesticks. 'The hags whom thou hadst imposed 'upon thee for the decayed beauties of 'thy seraglio, were really a set of not-'able old dames, whom he had tutored 'for the purpose: thy former mistresses, 'who were insignificant slaves, were dis-'missed. She who personated the feign-'ed Cadiga, acted her part to admira-'tion; and, with the artful contrivance 'of having a rose-bud painted on her 'breast, a mark which your young fa-'vourite really bore from nature, she 'had cunning and address enough to 'impose herself on you for the very 'Cadiga whom you formerly loved.

'I believe,' proceeded the sultan, 'you are by this time convinced, that 'there was nothing supernatural in the 'several events of your life, and that 'you were in reality nothing more than 'the dupe of your own folly and avarice.

'Thou mayest remember, after this 'period, that, fated with voluptuous-'ness, thy licentious heart began to 'grow hardened; and from rioting with-'out controul in pleasures, which, 'however criminal in themselves, carry 'at least with them the excuse of temp-'tation, thou wantonly didst stir up, 'and indulge the latent cruelty of thy 'nature. Thy ungoverned passions led 'thee to an act of blood! thou piercedst 'with thy poniard the honest creature 'who remonstrated with thee on thy 'evil works; but Heaven did not, how-'ever, permit thee to deprive her of life.

'See, Nourjahad, of what the heart 'of man is capable, when he shuts his 'eyes against the precepts of our holy 'prophet. Thou stoodst as it were alone 'in the creation; and, self-dependent for 'thy own happiness or misery, thou 'lookedst not for rewards or punish-'ments in that invisible world, from 'which thou thoughtest thyself by thy 'own voluntary act excluded.

'This last barbarous deed, however, 'called aloud for chastisement; and thou 'wast for the third time deceived with a 'belief that thou hadst slept a number of 'years, in which many mortifying revo-'lutions had happened in thy family.

'I was now resolved to be myself an 'eye-witness of thy behaviour, and to 'try if there was any spark of virtue 'remaining in thy soul which could 'possibly be rekindled.

'I disguised myself in the habit of a 'slave; and having altered my face, and 'my voice, I presented myself to thee 'under the name of Cozro. Thou 'knowest what passed between us on thy 'first awaking from thy compelled slum-'bers, and that I heard and saw with

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'what indifference thou receivedſt the 'news of my ſuppoſed death.—But I 'will not reproach thee with ingrati-'tude; let the memory of *that* be buried 'with the reſt of thy errors.

'I had ſoon the ſatisfaction to find 'that thou waſt as it were a new man. 'The natural goodneſs of thy diſpoſi-'tion, thy reaſon, thy experience of the 'deceitfulneſs of worldly enjoyments, 'joined to the remorſe which thou couldſt 'not help feeling for a ſeries of vice and 'folly, at length rouzed thee to a juſt 'ſenſe of what thou owedſt to the dig-'nity of thy own nature, and to the 'duties incumbent on thee towards the 'reſt of thy fellow-creatures.

'I now diſcovered, with joy, that 'thou hadſt intirely diveſted thyſelf of 'that inſatiable love of pleaſure to 'which thou hadſt before addicted thy-'ſelf, and that thou no longer didſt re-'gard wealth, but as it enabled thee to 'do good. There was but one trial 'more remained. "If," ſaid I, "his re-"pentance be ſincere, and he has that "heroiſm of mind which is inſeparable "from the truly virtuous, he will not "ſhrink at death; but, on the contrary, "will look upon it as the only means "by which he can obtain thoſe refined "enjoyments ſuited to the divine part of "his nature, and which are as much "ſuperior in their eſſence, as they are "in their duration, to all the pleaſures "of ſenſe."

'I made the trial.—The glorious vic-'tory, O Nourjahad, is thine! By thy 'contempt of riches, thou haſt proved 'how well thou deſervedſt them; and 'thy readineſs to die, ſhews how fit 'thou art to live.

'In the ſpace of fourteen moons, (for 'it is no longer ſince I firſt impoſed on 'thy credulity the belief of thy mira-'culous ſtate) thou haſt had the expe-'rience of four times ſo many years. 'Such aſſuredly would be the viciſſitudes 'of thy life, hadſt thou in reality poſ-'ſeſſed what thou didſt in imagination. 'Let this dream of exiſtence, then, be a 'leſſon to thee for the future, never to 'ſuppoſe that riches can enſure hap-'pineſs; that the gratification of our 'paſſions can ſatisfy the human heart; 'or that the immortal part of our na-'ture will ſuffer us to taſte unmixed 'felicity, in a world which was never 'meant for our final place of abode. 'Take thy amiable Mandana to thee 'for a wife, and receive the fixed 'confidence and love of Schemzed-'din.'

The hiſtory ſays, that Nourjahad was from that minute raiſed to be the firſt man in power next to the ſultan; that his wiſdom and virtue proved an orna-ment and ſupport to the throne of Perſia, during the courſe of a long and proſ-perous life; and that his name was fa-mous throughout the Eaſtern world.

FINIS.

LETTERS

FROM

FELICIA TO CHARLOTTE;

CONTAINING

A SERIES OF THE MOST INTERESTING EVENTS,

INTERSPERSED WITH

MORAL REFLECTIONS;

CHIEFLY TENDING TO PROVE THAT THE SEEDS OF VIRTUE ARE IMPLANTED IN THE MIND OF EVERY REASONABLE BEING.

BY MR. COLLYER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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M DCC LXXXVIII.

FELICIA to CHARLOTTE.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

LETTER I.

DEAR MADAM,

AFTER a long journey that took up four days, I arrived laſtweek at my aunt's, where, I ſuppoſe, I am to ſtay a conſiderable time; in which I aſſure you my chief uneaſineſs will conſiſt in being ſeparated from you; and that, you may depend upon it, will be great enough o'conſcience. However, to paſs away ſome of my hours, which I foreſee will lie pretty heavy upon my hands, I will ſend you an account of all that happens worth your notice: but you muſt not be offended, if I tell you I write as much to amuſe myſelf as to pleaſe you; ſince this employment will not only be a recreation to me, but will flatter and ſoothe my friendſhip; and, in ſome meaſure, compenſate for the want of your company. I ſhall always, while I am writing, think I am talking to you; and am even now delighted with the idea of that pleaſing intercourſe of minds we ſhall probably enjoy at this diſtance. How agreeable is the thought, that, as often as you hear from me, you will learn every thing that paſſes in the ſoul of your friend; whilſt I, in return, ſhall meet with the ſame proof of an open undiſguiſed friendſhip from you! For my part, I intend to diſcover all the ſecret folds of my heart, and to unboſom myſelf to you without the leaſt reſerve, as I am perſuaded I ſhall never have any ſecrets which you have not a right to be acquainted with, and which I ſhall not be very ready to communicate. Pray do you follow my example; write with the ſame unreſerved freedom, and never diſguiſe thoſe little affairs in which your heart is concerned; for theſe things, I think, my friendſhip gives me a peculiar right to know.

I am now I don't know how many miles diſtant from dear London, the ſeat of your joys; and muſt not expect for a long time to ſee again the Mall, the play-houſe, or the drawing-room; but I begin to fancy, that in a month or two I ſhall be reconciled to gloomy ſhades, tall trees, murmuring brooks, and all the ſylvan ſcenes which ſurround me; and even ceaſe to regret my diſtance from the genteel diverſions of the gay and polite world; for if plain and ſimple Nature can ever appear agreeable, it muſt be here, where ſhe ſhews herſelf in all her beauties. What a change have I already undergone! I riſe at leaſt three or four hours ſooner than I ever did in my life before, and even go to bed long before midnight. Inſtead of the rattling of coaches, I now hear only the ruſtling of leaves, or the warbling of birds; and, inſtead of rich perfumes, my ſenſes are regaled with the milder fragrance of nature.

Nay, pr'ythee, my dear, don't laugh at me: I am yet neither poet nor lover, nor do I find that I am in the leaſt danger of being either of them. You, I know, cannot perceive any charms in ſuch a rude retreat, fit to engage the attention of a fine lady. Here are no powdered beaux, or gilt equipages, none of the ſplendid allurements with which

ladies of your vivacity are apt to be captivated: but, for my part, a natural tincture of gravity may possibly make me more easily support the absence of what your gayer disposition may induce you to consider as the very essence of happiness.

My aunt, I find, is a lady of plain good sense, and of a most free, easy, and engaging behaviour; but, as to her person, it is far from being agreeable; her face is of an immoderate length; her eyebrows large, and very dark; and her nose of a more than ordinary size: but, notwithstanding this, she has an air of affability and good-nature spread over her countenance, which, at the first view, inspires every one that sees her with a pleasing confidence. Her easy, condescending goodness, her sweetness, affability, and complaisant freedom, diffuse over the minds of the meanest objects such a self-complacency, such an unreserved frankness of heart, as renders it impossible for them, in her company, to be stiffened by an uneasy restraint. The lowest being that bears the stamp of the human nature is an object of her regard: she puts herself upon a level with them in her conversation, and even uses a language different from her own, in order to suit her discourse to their ideas, and to make them understand her advice, the consolation she offers them, and the friendly concern she feels for their happiness. As to her stature, it is something above the ordinary height, though she is a little awry; and, indeed, she has nothing about her that speaks the accomplished lady, though every body that sees her must immediately think (I should rather say *feel*) her a very good one. In short, she is a woman of great prudence, and a perfect œconomist, and therefore her thoughts seem equally divided between the management of her own family and a generous care for the welfare of those who apply to her for assistance. The education of her children makes up a great part of her felicity; it is a delightful employment, which she knows how to render as agreeable to them as to herself. The young ladies have been accustomed from their infancy to share with her in the delicate pleasure of communicating happiness; and have learnt from her, and an English Seneca, which they have almost by heart, the most engaging way of doing good. They have a small salary at their own disposal; and their good mother tells me, she often feels her heart glow with a secret pleasure at seeing them dry up the tears of the distressed, with that money with which they had intended to purchase some fashionable piece of vanity, or some ornamental trifle. The old gentleman, my uncle, who died about seven years ago, left her with four children, and a large estate, but very much incumbered with mortgages, which, by her prudent management, she has lately paid off. And she would now be very happy, had she not a son, whose brutal extravagance and debaucheries render her extremely anxious for his welfare. This young man is about eighteen, of a robust constitution, pretty fat, and with a countenance perfectly expressive of the dulness and stupidity of his mind, which has been too rough to be polished by a most free and liberal education; but as he is going to make the tour of Europe, I shall probably never have occasion to mention him again. The eldest daughter I have not seen yet, she being lately married to a gentleman at a considerable distance from hence. Amelia, her sister, is a lady agreeable in her person, and happy in the possession of a calm, yet sedate mind; her passions seem to be regular, her thoughts just, her language unaffected, soft, and flowing. After this short character, you cannot wonder, that I no sooner knew her, than I conceived a friendship for her, which I am persuaded is now become reciprocal. Polly, the youngest daughter, is not quite ten years old; she is a lovely creature, of a most promising genius, and has such an earnest thirst after knowledge, that her pretty questions frequently give me a very high satisfaction.

With these two young ladies, and some other agreeable companions, I spend great part of my time. The sun is no sooner risen, than we take a walk, and taste the freshness of the morning air in some of those rural scenes which surround our house; while the innocent gaiety of my new friends gives an alacrity to my spirits, which is greatly heightened by the softness of these early breezes, and the various scenes of natural beauty which every way present themselves to our view.

But it is time to conclude, since I have written enough for my first letter; and therefore shall only add, what your affection

affection will, I am sure, make you most solicitous to know; that is, that I am perfectly well, and have no other uneasiness than what arises from my distance from you. I am, dear Charlotte, yours most affectionately,

FELICIA.

LETTER II.

THE pleasure, dear Madam, you express at hearing from me, is such a proof of your affection, that I cannot help taking notice of it. The endearments of a friend have something so extremely charming in them, that it is impossible we should be insensible of their value. If flattery easily insinuates itself into our hearts, it is chiefly because it soothes our desire of pleasing; but how much sweeter are the caresses of a person on whose esteem we found our happiness, and whose satisfaction rebounds back, and gives us who confer it a kind of self-approbation! So much for preface.

Two or three days after I sent you my letter, my cousin Amelia proposed our taking an airing in the coach the next morning, as soon as it was light, which was accordingly put in practice: but we had not gone far, before the stillness of the air, and the novelty of the prospect to me, induced us to walk. A sandy rock, out of which were cut huge caverns that seemed ready to fall, was on our left, and by a delightful contrast set off the spacious meadows and fields which, on the right, extended to an inconceivable distance, where our sight was only bounded by a clear sky, that seemed to meet the ground, and in some places by hills which could hardly be distinguished from the gilded clouds in which they wrapped themselves. Our eye, at one view, took in abundance of little villages, which arising from amidst the trees at a great distance, agreeably diversified this delightful landscape*.

Whilst we walked on, discoursing on several agreeable subjects, I observed that the scene presently changed, and these precipices terminated in a high and steep hill, so full of tall trees and shrubs, that it formed a most delightful grove. The grass here was mixed with beds of violets and primroses, which diffused a charming fragrance through the air. Here we sat down to refresh ourselves on the banks of a small fountain, which with a gentle murmur ran from a cavity under the hill; and, after having drank some of the water out of a bason which was chained to the side of it, we struck into a narrow winding path, and began to mount the eminence, to take in a larger view of the vernal beauties of this delightful scene; when I observed a fine river†, which with serpentine meanders added to the beauty of the whole. But while we were listening to the different warblings of a number of birds of various kinds, and observing the rabbits scudding along, and skipping at our approach into their burrows, we were interrupted from our contemplations of these trifling amusements, by a voice that at once seized and fixed our attention; for we were near enough to hear distinctly every word; though, when we looked around us, we could discover no human object near. The unknown person seemed engaged in a contemplation of the harmony of nature; and with a soft, yet manly voice, spoke the following rhapsody—

'O Nature! how beautiful, how 'lovely, are all thy works! With what 'pleasure do I gaze around, and view 'the vast profusion of wisdom and in'finite skill that surrounds me! Blessed 'retreat! where every object leads me 'to explore the bounteous Author of all 'goodness, who thus distributes his fa'vours to man, and teaches us to con'cur with him in promoting the univer'sal good. While Heaven, all-com'municative Heaven, thus profusely 'showers down it's blessings, and im'parts to us all that can charm our 'senses, or ravish our grateful minds 'with innocent delight, shall we with 'contracted arts confine our pleasure to 'the narrow limits of selfish passions, 'and not rather exert our utmost abili'ties, in order to disperse a flood of joy, 'and render the beauteous, the har'monious scene, compleat?—But, ah!

* Lest this description should be thought romantick, the Editor thinks himself obliged to inform the publick, that this and the rest of the landscapes are actually situated near Nottingham; and that these ladies, he supposes, resided in a village not far distant from that town.

† The river Trent.

'how

'how small a share can I contribute to 'the great design? lost in a manner 'amidst the immensity of nature, like a 'single flower amidst the numberless 'number which enamel this verdant 'carpet, or a small plant in this vernal 'landscape, too minute singly to gain 'the attention, and which could not be 'missed out of the blooming scene!—But 'why do I complain? Am I not sufficiently happy, if, amidst the works of 'my Creator, I can, like them, by fulfilling the duties of my narrow sphere, 'promote the general splendor and harmony of the whole? If the inanimate 'creation can give such pleasures to a 'rational mind, how much nobler must 'be the satisfaction with which superior 'beings view the beauteous order of 'the more noble, the intellectual world, 'when the passions and inclinations of 'the mind compose an harmonious 'scene, infinitely more lovely than the 'finest and most elegant dispositions of 'matter!'

Here the voice stopped. Perhaps we were discovered through the trees, and the unknown person was displeased at being interrupted in his private reverie. However, curiosity made us proceed; for I was very desirous of knowing the stranger, whose sentiments and language had prejudiced me very much in his favour.

I do not know, my dear, what you will think of our adventure; but, for my part, I formed a most amiable idea of the person of this stranger, though I had never seen him; and his words made such an impression upon my heart, that I believe I have repeated every syllable: but the graceful manner, and the musick of his voice, are what I can never give you the least idea of; for, upon my word, they were quite inexpressible.

Amelia endeavoured now to persuade me to return; but I was too much charmed with what I had heard to consent to do it immediately. Prompted by a little female curiosity, I resolved, if possible, to steal at least one view of this stranger, which I did not doubt but I might easily do without being perceived. She laughed at my motive; but, however, at my entreaties, consented to follow me. I then struck into one of the winding paths which lay on the side from whence I heard the voice; but had not gone far, when, looking back, I missed my companion. This at once alarmed me, and made me very uneasy, both on her account and my own. I stood still—I listened. I returned back, stopping every moment to look around me; but, just as I regained the place from whence I engaged her to accompany me in this foolish expedition, I heard a rustling of the leaves at a small distance, when my heart suddenly leaped with joy at the thought of having found again my friend: but was quite mistaken; for, instead of her, a young man appeared from amidst the boughs. He came to me with an air of respect.—But I shall forbear giving a description of his person till I can give you that of his mind; and that must not be till I know him better, which I hope will not be long. However, I must tell you, that I believe it was the same who had a few minutes before so agreeably engaged my attention. He no sooner came up to me, than he observed the disorder of my countenance, which in a moment was imprinted upon his; when, making me a low bow—'May I presume to ask, 'Madam,' said he, with a trembling voice, and a most expressive look, 'what 'it is that discomposes you? Are you 'alone?'—'Yes, Sir,' returned I; 'I 'have lost my companion, a young lady, 'who, I imagine, is in equal pain to 'find me.'—'Well, Madam,' replied he, with an ingenuous look, 'might I 'hope that you would put yourself un'der the protection of a stranger, I 'would gladly offer my service to wait 'upon you till you rejoin the lady.' Here he glanced his eyes upon me, as if to anticipate my answer; but immediately cast them down to the ground, and, I think, a sigh escaped him.

Though I was under no apprehension as to the behaviour of this young gentleman, yet I could not help hesitating a little, to consider what answer I should make him. I was apprehensive that, should my cousin find me in his company, she might think I avoided her with design and this might possibly not only disgust her, but give her some thoughts to my prejudice: besides, in the opinion of the world, it might not be thought decent for me to be found so early, in such a retired place, with a man whom I had never seen before, and to whose character I must confess myself an utter stranger. But these reflections would doubtless have given way to my inclinations, had not the young gentleman perceiving

R. Smirke, del.

Milton. Sculp.

Plate I.

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perceiving that I continued silent, resumed—'I see, Madam, you are afraid 'of trusting yourself with me; I cannot 'blame your caution, and will therefore leave you, in order to seek the 'lady whose absence seems to give you 'some pain; and shall think myself very 'happy if my endeavours should restore 'your quiet.'—'This is a very obliging 'proposal, Sir,' returned I; 'and I 'gladly take you at your word: meanwhile, I will wait here to learn your 'success; but I am ashamed to give 'you this trouble.'—'I have no other 'trouble, Madam,' returned he, 'than 'in separating myself from you. But 'I ought not to complain, since it is to 'serve you.'

Here he retired; but had not been gone long, before I saw him return with precipitation, when he told me that he saw a lady walking down the hill; on which I permitted him to conduct me out of the wood, took my leave of him, and presently rejoined her.

Amelia was too angry with me to forbear reproaching me for the uneasiness I had given her, though she expressed her resentment in the most obliging terms; but was soon pacified, when she found it was done without design, and I had been equally troubled on her account: and, indeed, my uneasiness had been a sufficient punishment for my indiscretion. But I have troubled you too long with things of no consequence; and will only add, that we made haste to our coach, and were driven home to breakfast.

Pray give my respects where due; and do me the justice to think me, dear Charlotte, the sincerest and most affectionate of your friends,

FELICIA.

LETTER III.

WELL, well, my dear, you may be as merry as you will with my romantick adventure, as you are pleased to call it. I do not wonder at your laughing at me, for I had penetration enough to foresee it: however, that could not prevent my giving you a faithful account of this extraordinary ramble; for I had rather you should be a little merry at my expence, than I be such a rebel to friendship, as to conceal any of my pleasures or pains from you. But if what I related in my last may appear too trifling to deserve your notice, I do not doubt but I shall atone for the trouble I have given you in reading it, by describing scenes more interesting.

The person you are pleased, in the gaiety of your heart, to call some sylvan deity, who you suppose inhabits the enchanting groves, the Arcadian scenes you say I have described, is a mere earthly being, as very a mortal as you or I; and the native beauties of this rural retreat, notwithstanding what you are pleased to insinuate to the contrary, are so far from being heightened by my description, that, were you with me, you would hardly think I had done them justice. But while you are attracted by the charms of your young admirer's dress and splendid equipage, and dazzled with the glitter of a court, no wonder you think these humbler scenes, these innocent and simple charms, which please me, are almost wholly fictitious, and little else but the invention of a luxuriant fancy—a sort of fairy land, that exists no where but in my own imagination.

I saw the amiable youth I am now to describe to you at church last Sunday. The moment I cast my eyes upon him, I observed his fixed upon me; and, to make an ingenuous confession, I felt my heart instantly flutter with a very agreeable emotion. I had for several days longed to see him; and could not now help feeling a secret joy at finding my wishes granted. But I observed, at the same time, that he was in no danger of appearing singular by the regards he cast upon me; for as I was the gayest lady in the whole assembly, every body, as soon as I arose up, incessantly gazed at me. When the service was over, I grew impatient to know if he would speak to me: I fancied he would; at least, I wished it. I saw him wait at the door—I saw it with pleasure—and went out with my aunt and cousins, filled with a formidable idea of his perfections. But how was I mortified, when, after having addressed himself to my aunt and her daughters, and paid them some civil compliments, he took his leave, only making me a low bow, even without opening his lips to me!

Could any thing, Madam, be more provoking than this behaviour? Not that I was in love with him—at least, I was resolved not to think I was. But to see him so insensible of my attractions! intolerable!

intolerable! Not to say one civil thing to me! what stupidity! If I had been ever so ugly, he could have done no more! But, however aukward this fit of resentment may appear in me, especially while I declare that I have my heart in my own possession, yet I had really some reason for it. There is certainly a pleasure in thinking ourselves beloved by a man of sense; and if I was not actually in love, I had a very great ambition to make him so. He would have been a most agreeable conquest; and I should doubtless have thought his addresses a greater honour than those of a thousand coxcombs.

The next day, however, I had the pleasure of seeing him at my aunt's, and could not help flattering myself that I was the cause of his visit. We had just dined; and Amelia, having taken up one of the volumes of the Spectator, was reading the affecting story of Incle and Yarico, when he entered the parlour; and, paying us some compliments, seated himself near the door; desiring, at the same time, that he might not interrupt our entertainment. As my cousin had been used to treat him with all imaginable freedom, she concluded her story, and we entered upon a conversation on the nature of ingratitude; a subject that afforded the young gentleman a happy opportunity of discovering the delicacy of his sentiments. He said a thousand things equally entertaining and instructive, and enlivened his discourse with abundance of tender, generous, and manly thoughts: but at last, my aunt being called out of the room, her daughters soon followed her. I was now in the most desirable situation, and began to prepare myself for hearing a conversation infinitely more interesting. But how great, how inconceivable, was my surprize, to find the person, who a minute before entertained us with such elegance of thought and expression, instantly become speechless! After fixing his eyes upon me for some time, he arose; and, with an air that expressed a tender diffidence, changed his seat, and sat near me; but still continued silent. His eyes, which had a remarkable languor, and a pleasing softness, were still fixed upon me, but I no sooner met his glances, than, with a disordered look, he cast them to the floor. I endeavoured in vain to resume the conversation; he replied with such a tender diffidence as would not suffer him to proceed: his words faltered on his lips, and were uttered with so much confusion, that it was not difficult to observe the struggle he had with his heart, and the pleasing source of his embarrassment.

Ah, Madam! could I desire a more agreeable triumph? You, perhaps, had you been in my place, would have laughed heartily at seeing him look silly; would have ridiculed this softness of soul; and, with your usual sprightliness, have diverted yourself at beholding a man so over-awed by your charms as to give such proofs of his weakness before you: and, indeed, can any thing more agreeably flatter our vanity, or give us a higher opinion of our own attractions, than to see them make a fool of Good-sense, and strike Eloquence itself dumb? But, alas! I found myself little disposed to assume any such airs of barbarous gaiety. I was not much less weak than he, and could not help pitying, as well as blaming, that modest diffidence that gave him such pain: but this was a pity that was attended with a most exquisite pleasure; nor could I, indeed, have felt a greater at seeing him at my feet, had he even assumed the buskin, and entertained me with all the lofty and melting language of a hero in tragedy. Not all the passionate rants of a lover, who would persuade me to the folly of believing he was dying at my feet, and that his fate depended upon my smiles or frowns, could have given me half the proofs of a sincere passion that I now received.

As I promised to give you some idea of his perfections, I will endeavour to do it now: his silence left me at full liberty to examine his person, and I made use of this opportunity of doing it with the utmost freedom; and therefore, without the least flattery, I shall give you his portrait as follows.

You must know, then, that he is about twenty; and as to his stature, not much taller than I am; which, by the way, is much too short for the hero of a romance, who ought at least to be six feet high: his complexion is lively; his eyes blue and sparkling, and so very expressive, that they seem to discover, in the strongest manner, all the sensations of his heart—a heart that, I believe, would be a great loser, had it not so true an interpreter to render all it's emotions visible; since in his open countenance is

painted

painted an ingenuous honesty, the most lively traces of all that is humane, friendly, and benevolent, mixed with an engaging modesty and simplicity of manners. His hair is of a dark brunette, and hangs in natural curls, which just touch his shoulders. As to his thoughts, they seem bent on the improvement of his mind; and the love of truth and virtue—antiquated perfections!—are so deeply impressed there, that he seems to have very little idea of those fancied charms, those fashionable accomplishments, which are necessary to form the character of the fine gentleman: nay, the aukward creature does not appear to have the least notion of the art of handling a snuff-box with a grace; does not even know how to murder the reputation of those who are absent, or flatter those that are present; and though he seems very assiduous to please me, he has not, I can tell you, had the complaisance to let me know that he thinks I have more charms than his grandmother.

You have now, my dear Charlotte, a right to form what judgment you please upon the picture I have drawn. The modest rusticity of my spark, so very different from the confident addresses of the town beaux, must make him seem a very odd sort of a creature to you, who are so used to hear yourself praised in lofty strains, that you will, perhaps, be surprized that there should be any other way of touching the heart. But, for my part, however ridiculous his behaviour may appear to you, I cannot help telling you, that I found myself exceedingly moved with that tender diffidence and melting confusion, which, in spite of himself, discovered what I am persuaded he would very gladly have concealed. His silence itself, added to the several tender emotions I observed in his countenance, made some strange advances in my heart; and, to be sincere, I do not know what may be the effect of two or three more such tender interviews.

After this frank confession, I know you are more inclined to laugh at me than at him. Do so, if you please; I shall find an opportunity of laughing at you in my turn. But to proceed. My aunt at last rejoined us, after half an hour's absence; in which time I had not one gallant thing said to me, not a syllable that could tell he was my lover: every declaration of this kind was perfectly involuntary; nor do I know when he will have resolution enough to unburthen his heart to me. But, however merry you may make yourself at this letter, I dare say you will be pleased with the confidence I repose in you, and with the fresh assurances I make you of being, dear Madam, your most sincere, and affectionate friend,

FELICIA.

LETTER IV.

DEAR CHARLOTTE,

I Do not think there is any occasion to make an apology for sending you this so soon after my last, though I have not yet received an answer to it. I know you are always glad to hear from me; and therefore, without ceremony, I follow the dictates of my heart, which lead me to communicate every thing to you that I have reason to flatter myself will be an agreeable amusement.

A few days ago, my aunt having engaged to spend a day or two with an elderly gentleman, who lives at a village a few miles distant from our house, they made me one of the party; and we accordingly set out in the coach. The old gentleman, who expected us, met us with his pipe in his mouth, and, in an agreeable friendly manner, paid us the compliments of his house before we arrived at it; and then conducted us home, smoaking all the way at the coach-door. As soon as we entered his house, his unreserved behaviour rendered his company very diverting. He enlivened the conversation with abundance of merry stories, which his homourous and pleasant manner rendered vastly diverting: but the worst part of our entertainment consisted in our being obliged to bear with the impertinence of an old maiden lady, the gentleman's sister, who, out of an affectation of extraordinary piety and prudence, joined to an aukward air of over-strained modesty, assumed an authority that made her perfectly ridiculous. You never, in all your life, I dare say, beheld so compleat a prude: she would insinuate that there was a double meaning in the most innocent expressions; and would frequently set us upon searching for an indecent thought, where, I dare say, none but herself ever had any. This was the censor of the company, from whom our facetious friend often met with a sharp reprimand.

'Fie, fie!' would she frequently cry, interrupting him, tossing up her head, and giving him a look of supercilious disdain, 'I protest you make me blush. 'Really you will oblige me to leave the 'room.' But the best of it was, that this gentleman's obscenity was like some people's wit, with this difference only, that as nobody can see that but themselves, so none of the company could find him guilty of a want of decency, but this experienced maid. Besides, her comments were an hundred times worse than the text. She must certainly have a most fruitful invention, as well as a very unchaste cast of mind; or else, I think it hardly possible that she should be so very intelligent in things, which it is the greatest glory of ladies in our circumstances not to understand. Modesty is the distinguishing virtue of our sex; nor can a gentleman violate it in our presence without being guilty of an unpardonable rudeness; but this virtue will never teach us to torture words and syllables to make them speak a sense of which the speaker had not the least idea. This would be to act entirely inconsistent with that love of decency to which we make pretensions.

But to return to our prude. You would have laughed to hear her (while with an air of the most ridiculous affectation she drew up her mouth) express her aversion for the nasty filthy creatures, the men. She is surprized that our sex can be so impudent as to marry. And though she has had the greatest and most advantageous offers, (which, by the way, her small remains of beauty and sense would not tempt one to believe) she could never be prevailed upon so much as to think with patience on the nasty odious things.

Severe as this lady was upon the old gentleman, he was not much behind her in his replies, in which he raillied her so agreeably, that I could almost forgive her impertinence on account of the pleasant remarks it occasioned.

As soon as dinner was over, she began with a severe censure upon the weakness and depravity of human nature, which opened the way for abundance of devout scandal and pious defamation. And as this gave her a happy occasion of mentioning, by way of illustration, the real or imaginary vices of her neighbourhood, she seemed to talk on this subject with an unusual satisfaction. Her immaculate soul triumphed over the crimes of the multitude, and made her look down upon them with a sacred indignation. Every foible was represented in the most glaring light, and a reason given for all the accidents which had happened within her notice. Elated with the most pompous ideas of her own spotless virtue, she pretended to know why one was thrown from his horse, why another was robbed, or another dangerously ill of a fever; and pointed out the respective crimes which were the cause of each disaster; while her misfortunes, on the contrary, were only the trials of an indulgent Providence. What an admirable artifice to extinguish the generous impressions of humanity, and to render the heart insensible to pity! to blot out all the traces of the Deity, and stamp the brute on the reasonable soul! But what, if possible, added to the cruelty and inhumanity of her slanders was, her indirect insinuations, artfully mixed with a pretended air of friendship, which were a greater insult on those she aspersed than her more open invectives. 'Alas!' cried she, with a sigh, 'who would think that my dear 'friend—I won't mention her name; 'my regard for her will not suffer me 'to do that; but she does not live many 'doors from us—I say, who would 'think that so fine a lady, with such a 'modest and artless look, was not as 'perfect in her virtue as she is in the 'symmetry of her person! But I am 'glad she has kept her folly to herself; 'and indeed am too much her friend 'ever to divulge it. I have heard, in-'deed, a little whisper—but no matter 'what they say of her: I hope it only 'proceeds from malice and ill-nature. 'O fie! how can people slander one 'another at this rate! to be sure, it is 'very wicked of them.'

'Yes, doubtless, Madam,' replied the old gentleman, interrupting her with a sneer; 'we know you are very sensi-'ble of the malignity of this crime.' Here he winked at my aunt, shrugged up his shoulders, and she proceeded—'Yes, Heaven knows slander is my aver-'sion,' resumed she, 'and I would not, 'for the world, be guilty of it. What 'if she is not so slender as she used to be; 'she may be troubled with the dropsy, 'you know. I love to put the best con-'struction upon every thing.'

'Slender! Madam,' replied our old friend,

friend, ſmiling with an air of indignation; 'I ſaw that lady yeſterday, and 'upon my word I never beheld a finer 'ſhape, or a more eaſy air; I could 'not help taking particular notice of 'her.'—'How! Sir,' cried ſhe, with a look that expreſſed her diſappointment and confuſion; 'I am perſuaded you 'don't know who I mean.'—'Yes, 'Madam, I do,' returned he; 'and 'between you and I, however you con-'ceal names, you are always ſure to 'point your invectives in ſuch a man-'ner, that nobody can miſtake the per-'ſon they are levelled at. This ſhew 'of friendſhip is only a pretence, a ſpe-'cious artifice to wound the deeper. 'Don't you think, ladies,' continued he, turning to us, 'that my ſiſter, with 'her white unſullied virtue, muſt appear 'to great advantage, while ſhe is ſur-'rounded by ſuch a black neighbour-'hood? How beautiful muſt a ſwan 'look in the midſt of a flock of ravens!'

She was now as red as fire, and was doubtleſs going to make a ſevere reply, when, to my no ſmall ſatisfaction, the converſation was diverted by a gentleman's entering the room, with a young lady of genteel appearance, and a perſon formed to prepoſſeſs every one in her favour. Our good-natured prude ſeemed a little confounded at their preſence; but ſoon recovering herſelf, ran to embrace the lady, with ſuch an appearance of ſincerity, that I began to think her more capable of friendſhip than I had before imagined; but while ſhe was laviſhing upon this ſtranger the moſt ardent careſſes, and with an exceſs of complaiſance, thanking her for her viſit, my aunt told me, that this was the lady ſhe had a minute before ſo cruelly aſperſed under the character of a friend.

All this while I had not taken notice of the gentleman who was brother to this injured lady; but when he was come up to us, I was ſeized with a ſudden flow of joy at ſeeing him the amiable youth I deſcribed to you in my laſt. But you can't imagine what an effect this diſcovery had upon me: the moment I caſt my eyes upon his ſiſter, and conſidered her as a lady vilely ſlandered by the perſon who was now embracing her, I could not, at firſt, forbear taking her part againſt the prude, and being highly offended at her hypocriſy; but now when I conſidered her as the ſiſter of this engaging youth, for whom I felt ſome of the moſt tender ſentiments, I could not help regarding the prude as a monſter, and entering into the injured lady's ſufferings, with a very different kind of indignation. The affront was become much nearer and more ſenſible than it was before. And indeed, nothing but my regard for peace could have prevented my cautioning her, whom I now conſidered as my friend, againſt one who could ſtab with a ſmile, and ſting the perſon ſhe hugged to her boſom. Lucius, for that is the young gentleman's name, ſaluted my aunt and couſins with an air the moſt free and engaging; but when he came to me, methought a timorous confuſion rendered his compliments hardly intelligible. However, he took a chair, when the old ſquire, with his uſual freedom, cried out, at the ſame time taking him by the hand, 'Well, my young phi-'loſopher, I am heartily glad to ſee 'you. Here is a lady in company has 'been degrading human nature moſt 'unmercifully; and has even aſſerted 'that we have all a natural propenſity 'to commit the blackeſt crimes. Ods 'my life, if I had been able to have 'managed an argument againſt her on 'ſuch a difficult ſubject, I ſhould have 'thought myſelf obliged to vindicate the 'honour of my own ſpecies; but now 'you are here, you muſt e'en do it for 'me. I am not willing to think myſelf a 'villain, nor would I maintain ſuch an 'ill opinion of my friends; but have you 'reſolution enough, my boy, to vin-'dicate your own ſentiments when they 'oppoſe thoſe of the ladies?'

'Yes, Sir,' returned he, ſmiling, 'when their honour is to be ſupported; 'but I hope there are none here that 'have really ſuch unworthy thoughts 'of themſelves and us. For my part,' continued he, with an air perfectly graceful, 'I think there can't be a 'greater reflection on the Author of Na-'ture, on his wiſdom and goodneſs, on 'his ſpotleſs purity, than this opinion, 'which at once renders man an object 'of deteſtation and abhorrence, and his 'Creator unworthy the title of the Fa-'ther of his rational creation; a title 'which reflects a glory upon our ſpe-'cies, and which ſprings from the moſt 'reſplendent as well as endearing at-'tribute of the Deity.

'If we impartially ſurvey the firſt 'impreſſions of nature, and the origin

'of our passions, we shall find that those 'propensities which are not acquired, 'are on the side of virtue. The mind 'of the infant no sooner begins to 'open and expand, than he feels the 'dawn of reason: the bright radiant 'stream of heavenly light pours into 'his soul, and he sees at once the natu-'ral deformity of some actions, and the 'native charms and intrinsick loveliness 'of others. But even before reason can 'take place, and while this resplendent 'ray of the Deity is too glimmering to 'direct him in the paths of truth and 'virtue, he feels within him an internal 'and moral sense, which distinguishes 'between virtue and vice, beauty and 'deformity, harmony and discord. He 'is delighted with striking colours; he 'is charmed with the melting warbling 'of a well-touched instrument; he is 'terrified with the braying of an ass, 'a shriek, or a clap of thunder. But 'whence can arise these various sen-'sations of pleasure, or of pain? 'Whence can spring these early ideas 'of harmony, proportion, and beauty, 'if they are not founded in the consti-'tution of nature, if there is not an in-'ternal sense, a natural taste by which 'they are qualified to discern them? 'Virtue is the musick of the soul, the 'harmony of the passions; it is the or-'der, the symmetry, the interior beauty 'of the mind; the source of the truest 'pleasures, the fountain of the sublim-'est and most perfect happiness. But 'let us have recourse to nature, and see 'if this be not the case. How early 'does the little creature feel sentiments 'of gratitude in return for the tender 'care of it's nurse! How early is it in-'tendered by the social affections of pi-'ty and compassion? And how pleasing-'ly does every natural gush of soft affec-'tion swell it's breast, and pour from 'it's pretty eyes! But why does it ex-'perience these tender feelings of the 'soul? For what reason does the un-'taught mind start back from spectacles 'of violence and horror? Why is it 'moved with pity? Why is it shocked 'and wounded? Why does it bleed at 'miseries in which itself has no imme-'diate concern? Is it not because it is 'naturally virtuous, naturally com-'passionate and sympathising?'

'What a delightful representation,' cried Amelia, with an expressive smile, 'have you given us of human nature! 'How very different from those gloomy 'discourses we daily hear of the wretch-'edness and deformity of all the race of 'Adam! Too many of our clergy seem 'to take a peculiar pleasure in degrad-'ing mankind, as if they thought there 'was no other way of exalting the De-'ity, than by debasing his offspring: 'and this they do by representing us as 'born in guilt, and naturally incapable 'of performing the least action, either 'virtuous in itself or acceptable to our 'Maker.'—'It is very true,' replied my aunt; 'but, in my opinion, nothing 'can be more injurious to the cause of 'virtue than such false representations. 'For my part, as I have carefully at-'tended to the actions and behaviour of 'children, in their most early infancy, 'I can say from experience, that I have 'never beheld the least traces of this 'natural turpitude, which is the subject 'of so many pompous harangues; but 'as I cannot be supposed to have car-'ried my reflections of this kind so far 'as Lucius, who, I find, has made this 'subject his study, I shall desire him to 'run through the most particular of 'those vices which are supposed to lurk 'in our hearts, in order to shew that 'they have no real existence in the con-'stitution of our nature.—But what you 'have said, Sir,' added she, addressing herself to Lucius, 'brings to my mind 'a circumstance, which may farther il-'lustrate your opinion of the moral 'sense, and prove by a familiar in-'stance, that it is really founded in na-'ture, and not merely a plausible re-'presentation of what we wish to be 'true. But, not to keep you any long-'er in suspence: some years ago, as I 'was at work in my parlour next the 'hall, I was alarmed at hearing some-'body fall down stairs; and my daugh-'ter Polly giving a shriek at the same 'time, I ran in a terrible fright to assist 'my child. But, with what surprize 'was I seized, to see, instead of her, a 'young man whom I had entertained 'the day before lying upon the floor, 'who arose the moment I entered the 'hall! The dear little creature, who 'had been the instant before at play, 'stood speechless; she was struck with 'compassion; her lips were pale, her 'cheeks were wet with tears, her joints 'trembled. I pressed her to tell me 'what was the matter, but could ob-'tain no other answer than—*The man! 'the man!* In short, her whole soul was 'in such an agony, that it was some

'time

'time before I brought her to herself. 'This sorry, I assure you, is fact; and 'I would desire this lady, if she can, to 'account for this tender flow of bene-'volence and compassion in a child of 'three years old: an age in which she her-'self must allow, that reason could have 'no share in the emotions of her heart.'

'Really, Madam,' replied the reli-gious prude, in a peevish tone, 'I am 'astonished to hear you. I thought you 'had been more orthodox than to assert 'such strange opinions. I am sorry to 'see that your fondness for your child 'has such an unhappy effect, as to shut 'your eyes against the truths of our 'religion. I will *warrant* you now 'you don't believe original sin. Don't 'we see every where the perverseness of 'children? But to be sure you won't 'see it—you don't know that they are 'given to lying, pride, and every vice 'they are capable of committing. One 'would think that experience alone 'would be sufficient to let us see that 'they are naturally wicked. Alas!' continued she, with a ridiculous whine, and at the same time shaking her head, 'these are proud thoughts; it is but too 'true, that our nature is sadly deprav-'ed, and that we are naturally inclined 'to all manner of crimes.'

'You must permit me, Madam, to 'dissent from your opinion,' replied the engaging Lucius with a smile; 'and I 'think I am able to prove that nature, 'who has so early prejudiced the soul on 'the side of virtue, has not thrown in 'amongst her favours any of those bale-'ful ingredients you mention. We re-'ceive nothing from the hands of the 'Supreme Being that is not like himself, 'perfectly good; nothing that he might 'not communicate consistent with his 'infinite benevolence: and therefore all 'I can grant is, that this moral sense, 'like the light of reason, is not in every 'one *equally* strong, refined and deli-'cate, though it is in all capable of di-'recting to the pursuit of what is ami-'able and praise-worthy. As to the 'perverseness of children, their lying, 'pride, and whatever else you are pleas-'ed to lay to their charge, they are 'easily accounted for. They have not 'only ill examples, but are taught to be 'vicious. Pains are taken to make them 'so; and the fond mother, without de-'sign, acts as if she laboured to erase 'out of it's mind the pure impressions 'of nature*. But I shall leave this 'subject, and endeavour to prove, that 'the several vices laid to our charge 'have not their source from nature.

* The judicious Mr. Locke considers this subject in a very particular manner. 'If we 'look into the common management of children,' says he, 'we shall have reason to 'wonder that there are any footsteps of virtue left in the world. What vice can be named 'which parents do not season them with, and drop into them the seeds of, as soon as 'they are capable to receive them? I don't mean by the examples they give, which is 'encouragement enough; but that which I would take notice of here, is the downright 'teaching them vice. *Give me a blow, and I will beat him*, is a lesson which most child-'ren hear every day: this naturally fixes in their minds principles of revenge. They are 'taught to be proud of their cloaths long before they put them on, and to treat with con-'tempt and insolence all who are not so well dressed as they; by which they render their 'hearts obdurate, and root out their natural sentiments of pity. Lying and equivocations 'are put into the mouths of young people, and commended in children, whilst they are 'for their parents advantage. Their minds are enervated by flattery, and luxury of every 'kind. Is my young master a little out of order, the question is, *What will my dear eat? 'What shall I get for thee?* Every body's invention is set on work to find out something 'luscious and delicate enough to prevail over the want of appetite, which nature has wisely 'ordered in the beginning of distempers, to prevent their increase.——He had the will 'of his maid before he could speak or go; he had the mastery of his parents ever since he 'could prattle; and why, now he is grown up, and is stronger and wiser than he was then, 'must he be restrained and curbed?—If his desires carry him to wine and women, they 'are objects as suitable to the longing of one of more years, as what he cried for, when 'little, were to the inclinations of a child.' See *Locke on Education, page* 34—46. But innumerable are the methods of instilling vice into the flexible mind of the infant. Their rewards render them incorrigibly obstinate, their punishments make impressions ne-ver to be erased. The *bobgoblin* is ever after a subject of terror; and the *poor unhappy wretch*, who was *to take them away when they were naughty*, has fixed deeply a contempt and aversion for objects of misery and distress. *The Editor.*

'Avarice,

'Avarice, with all it's black attendants, is confeſſedly a crime of old age, and ſeldom arrives at maturity till accompanied with grey hairs: nor can it have the leaſt foundation in the conſtitution of our frame, ſince it can only be compleated by time, and a conſtant war with ourſelves. Every object of real miſery, every inſtance of virtue in diſtreſs, demands our relief with ſuch a forcible eloquence, that we are obliged to ſtruggle with ourſelves in order to ſuppreſs our riſing compaſſion. The natural feelings of the heart, which on theſe occaſions prompt every man to pity, cannot be eraſed without a degree of ſelf-denial; a violence to reaſon, a violence to all the remains of humanity.

'As to lewdneſs, nature muſt utterly diſclaim it. What man, that has the leaſt remains of generoſity, the leaſt ſenſe of pity, would not ſhudder at the thought of betraying the lovely innocent to guilt, and ſhame, and infamy? What man, that has not loſt all the ſenſe and underſtanding of a man, all the ſoft and noble impreſſions of humanity, and who was one ſtep above a brute, would heſitate for a moment whether he ſhould bridle or indulge an inclination, when the dreadful conſequence lies ſo plainly before him—where miſery, inevitable miſery, muſt attend the partner of his pleaſures?

'But this is not all: we have not only a moral ſenſe, but a paſſion adapted to reſtrain our deſires, and reduce them within proper bounds; a paſſion ſuited to ſoften and reform our minds, by inſpiring the tendereſt, moſt noble and delicate ſentiments.' Here, giving me a look, he coloured, and at the ſame time ſuffered a ſigh to eſcape him; but immediately endeavouring to recover himſelf from his confuſion, which he ſtrove in vain to conceal, he reſumed—'But the force of love almoſt every one has experienced.'—'Ay, ay,' cried the old gentleman, laughing; 'and I don't queſtion but every one here has felt it's power. For my part, when I was a young man, I was a perfect inamorato.'—'Was you ſo?' cried the old maid: 'therefore, becauſe you were ſuch a fool, you muſt think, to be ſure, that I have been ſo too. No, Sir, I aſſure you I was never guilty of that weakneſs.'—'If love, Madam, is a weakneſs,' replied Lucius with ſome warmth, 'it is at leaſt the nobleſt weakneſs we are liable to. Love refines and humanizes the mind, gives a delicacy to our conceptions, and renders us incapable of injuring, even in thought, the dear object of our ſoft affections: and, in fine, is a noble counterpoiſe to thoſe deſires which Providence has wiſely given us, as it is directly calculated to prevent their carrying us beyond the bounds of reaſon and virtue. So the pleaſing ties of friendſhip, mutual affection, and publick-ſpiritedneſs, whoſe charms are almoſt univerſally felt, are an additional guard againſt our degenerating into baſe, mercenary, and ſelfiſh animals.

'But as we have all theſe ſtrong incitements to virtue, it may be aſked, Why there is ſuch a great degree of vice in the world? I anſwer, that it is owing to education; the continual temptation of preſent and ſenſible objects, and the powerful force of example. Theſe ſuſpend the generous and kindly impreſſions of humanity, petrify the tender heart, and make us ſhut our eyes and ears to pity.'

Here our old friend, who for ſome time ſeemed loſt in the pleaſure this converſation had given him, finding Lucius had done, aroſe up in a kind of extaſy, when holding his pipe in his hand, he cried out in a theatrical tone—

"We are by nature virtuous, by nature
"ſoft and humane,
"'Till ſelfiſh paſſions chill our young af-
"fections,
"And freeze the tender heart to icy hard-
"neſs:
"No more diſtreſſed Virtue ſwells our
"breaſts;
"No more we melt at others wants, and feel
"Thoſe foreign cares with painful friendly
"ſmart
"And ſoft compaſſion. The inward ſtruggle
"o'er,
"The conqueſt gained by the dire fury Vice,
"With Meducæan power we're chang'd to
"ſtone,
"To lifeleſs, ſenſeleſs ſtone."——

Here, in the height of his rhapſody, he ſtruck his pipe againſt the table, with a violence that made it fly into twenty pieces. The oddneſs of this whimſical behaviour made us immediately burſt out a laughing, and in a moment diſperſed that thoughtful air that our long

attention

attention to this grave discourse had spread over our faces.

I don't know, my dear Charlotte, what idea this conversation will give you of this amiable youth; nor can I tell how you will like his sentiments; but this I am sure of, that you are very much obliged to me for being at all this pains in transcribing, what perhaps only my esteem for the speaker made me fancy something curious: though you, perhaps, may think it hardly worth your notice. You imagine now that I have got a very extraordinary memory; but, to be sincere, I have done little more than transcribe what my aunt prevailed upon Lucius to give her afterwards in writing upon the subject; which he might easily recollect, as he was the chief speaker, and the sentiments entirely his own.

But all this while I had no opportunity of a moment's separate conversation with this engaging young gentleman: my heart longed to be entertained with a more interesting subject; a subject that would have been infinitely more delightful to me than the most refined speculations, though accompanied with all the charms of eloquence, all the striking graces which attended his manner of expressing himself. And I freely confess, that I could not help thinking him a little tedious, though my reason assented to every thing he said. But when he had done, the approbation he received from almost all the company, so agreeably flattered my esteem, or, if you insist upon it, I will say my *love*, that I never experienced half the delight, when in my vainest moments I have listened to the flattering praises of my admirers. But it is time to conclude this long letter, and therefore I shall only add, that I am yours, &c.

FELICIA.

LETTER V.

MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,

HOW inimitably pretty is your way of raillery! I could not read your letter without breaking off at least half a dozen times to laugh at your whimsical conceits. But however, you are never likely to see my spark in lawn sleeves, though you say there needs little more than for him to mount the rostrum to obtain them. What a grotesque figure have you drawn of a gaping congregation listening to his voice, while the soul of musick dwells upon his tongue, and all the ladies, charmed with his striking accents, surrender up their hearts, as I do, to the enchanting force of pleasing sounds and graceful action. Was that the case, I am of your mind, that amidst such a number of competitors, I might strive in vain to charm him; and therefore, was there any danger of his entering into holy orders, I should certainly use all the influence I have over him to prevent a step that you say would be so dreadfully fatal to my own repose. But, raillery apart, I will now return to my story.

In the evening we left our merry hospitable friend, and returned home without Lucius's having an opportunity of saying one tender thing to me; but his eyes, however, were less reserved, and methought entertained me with a language that I could easily understand. 'Ah! how much I love!' cried they, with a soft timidity; at least I fancied so: whilst an artless, sparkling glance of mine, in spite of myself, replied—'How much am I pleased that you should 'do so!' I know you can't keep your countenance at this mute kind of discourse; but really I am persuaded that it was very intelligible to us both, though it was so precipitate that nobody in the room could take notice of it. Why should we disguise our hearts, and teach our looks a reserve that we are far from feeling? These little arts should never be used to a man of sense and merit; as for the rest, we ought to have no care about them. Nor indeed need I blush to own, that this silent intercourse of souls gave me more pleasure than I ever received from any of my conquests. There is something noble in charming a youth of such exalted perfections; and, however insensible we may be when attacked by the impertinence of a fop, or a coxcomb, it would prove a want of the most laudable ambition not to be elated here, where fine sense, virtue, and an agreeable person, are so charmingly united.

As soon as we were seated in the coach, my aunt and cousins began to be very merry with the ridiculous character of the prude; when, at last, observing that I forebore joining in their conversation, Amelia tapped me hastily on the shoulder—'What is the matter?' cried she, with a pretty innocent giggle, at seeing me start;

ſtart; 'one would be almoſt tempted to 'think you in love. Come, rouze your-'ſelf out of this reverie, and let us enjoy 'the benefit of your company. How do 'you like Lucius?'—'Like him!' replied I, with a bluſh; 'why, I don't know; 'pretty well.'—'She is thinking, per-'haps, of her friends in town,' cried my aunt; 'or is it really this gentleman 'that employs your thoughts?' added ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to me. 'Lucius 'is a very deſerving man; and had he 'an eſtate any way equal to his merit, 'I could not wiſh you a greater hap-'pineſs than to have him for a huſband.' —'I was not thinking of a huſband, 'Madam,' replied I, with as uncon-cerned an air as poſſible; 'but has he 'only a ſmall fortune then? Pray what 'is his family? I ſuppoſe you can give 'me a particular account of it?' This was ſpoke with an aching heart oppreſſed with fears; for I could not help being alarmed at the very thought of a diſpa-rity of circumſtances; for though we may have ever ſo little ambition our-ſelves, our friends have always a great deal for us, and perhaps are apt to carry it a little too far. They do not think as we do, and are almoſt always blind to merit when unattended with riches: for as they ſincerely wiſh us every bleſſing, they cannot bear to think of our want-ing ſo eſſential a one as that on which depends, in a great meaſure, the repu-tation, the eaſe, the honours of life; the moſt conſpicuous and dazzling advan-tages.

My aunt, without any heſitation, re-plied—'My dear, you are in the right; 'I have been perfectly acquainted with 'Lucius's family for many years, and 'am very able to give you their hiſtory. 'His father was born to a ſmall eſtate; 'but what made this a real misfortune 'was, that the very means which re-'duced his patrimony, gave him diſ-'poſitions which rendered it the more 'difficult to ſupport himſelf in the nar-'row bounds that were allotted him. 'He was educated amidſt a round of 'pleaſure, and ſaw nothing but luxury 'and extravagance from his moſt early 'infancy. He imbibed the ſame deſires 'which had almoſt been the ruin of his 'father, and which have ſince had the 'ſame effect with reſpect to his own fa-'mily. When he was between twenty 'and thirty, he paid his addreſſes to a 'young lady, who, beſides a conſider-'able fortune, and much beauty, had 'a ſweetneſs of ſoul which gave a luſtre 'to every other perfection. This was 'ſpread over her countenance, and ap-'peared perfectly conſpicuous in every 'look and every action. In ſhort, he 'ſoon gained her affections, and, with 'the conſent of her friends, married her. 'Poor woman! how much do I pity 'her! He no ſooner got her fortune in 'his own hands, but, in ſpite of his 'good ſenſe, (for this muſt be allowed 'him) he reſumed thoſe expenſive diver-'ſions which he had before been obliged 'to lay aſide for want of the means of 'ſupporting them. The pleaſures of the 'bottle, horſe-races, gaming, have ever 'ſince taken up all his time; while his 'poor lady is treated with a barbarous 'contempt and inſolence; a cruel re-'ward for her generoſity in giving up 'her eſtate to him without reſerve. But 'his ſon and daughter, far from fol-'lowing his example, ſhun the contag-'gion of his vices as they would a peſti-'lence; and for their ſakes, as well as 'their mother's, I ſhall forbear giving 'a particular account of his debauches 'and irregularities. Alas! how un-'happy, how doubly unhappy, muſt ſuch 'a parent be, who meets with the keen-'eſt reproach even from the virtues of his 'children! How miſerable muſt that man 'be, if he has the leaſt ſenſe of inge-'nuity, to find himſelf the diſgrace 'of thoſe whom nature hath render-'ed dear to him! an object of ſhame 'and pity to his own offspring! They 'love the man, though they deteſt his 'vices; and give him their affection, 'though they are conſtrained to with-'hold from him their eſteem.'—'But, 'dear Madam,' cried I, with the tears ſtanding in my eyes, which the darkneſs of the evening, however, concealed from obſervation, 'how does this admirable 'lady ſupport this complicated diſtreſs? 'Can ſhe have any tenderneſs for ſuch 'a huſband? One would think a con-'duct like this would undoubtedly ex-'tirpate all the ſofter paſſions from her 'breaſt, and leave no room for any thing 'but hatred and contempt. What other 'return can be made to ingratitude and 'cruelty?'

'No, my dear,' replied my aunt, 'you have much too mean an opinion of 'this lady's goodneſs. There are very 'few in her circumſtances, indeed, who 'would not fly out into the greateſt ex-'travagance,

'travagances, and keep no measures with 'a man who behaved with so little re-'gard to the happiness of his family. 'They would make the house, whenever 'he was present, an almost perpetual 'scene of uproar; or, at least, would 'take all opportunities of publishing his 'vices and follies. But she, on the con-'trary, led by the sweetness of her tem-'per, has endeavoured to make him sen-'sible of the baseness of his conduct, by 'constantly shewing herself worthy of 'his esteem. She loves him still, in spite 'of his cruelty; and, I dare say, would 'think herself very happy if the loss of her 'estate would recover his heart; even if 'to obtain this blessing they were reduced 'to a state of meanness and poverty. 'She has too much good sense not to see 'that quarrelling and ill humour, from 'her, would greatly increase his aversion, 'and not only widen the breach between 'them, but be attended with the most 'unhappy effects with respect to their 'children; since it would infallibly wea-'ken their natural authority over them, 'make them divided, and become part-'ners in their unhappy discords; and, 'especially while they were young, 'might withdraw their affection from 'the man she loved more dearly than 'herself, and who, notwithstanding his 'ill conduct, had a right to their duti-'ful obedience. Had this been the case, 'it is easy to see the fatal consequences 'that would undoubtedly have follow-'ed, not the least of which would have 'been a want of education, a disregard 'of all instruction, and their being de-'prived of those just principles of virtue 'and honour, which raise the man above 'the brute, and render him worthy of 'the character of a rational and social 'being: for they would probably have 'disregarded the advice of those whose 'quarrels gave them perpetual uneasi-'ness. But this amiable lady's pru-'dence is visible in nothing more than 'in concealing the follies of her husband, 'which she does with as much care as if 'they were more immediately her own. 'She endeavours to hide even his least 'foibles, not only from her children, 'but from all the world. And I think 'I may safely affirm, that no one ever 'heard her say an unkind or disrespect-'ful word of him.'

'What an admirable character, Ma-'dam,' replied I, 'have you given us 'of this charming lady! How happy 'would most women find themselves, if '*they* were as tender of their husbands 'reputations! With what pain have I 'heard a lady, otherwise of good sense, 'expatiate for an hour together on the 'little trifling domestick quarrels which 'have happened between herself and her 'consort! How frequently do we hear 'married women dwell with a malicious 'satisfaction upon those vices, which 'prudence alone, without the least de-'gree of love, ought to teach them to 'conceal! For a woman always stands 'in some degree in the same light with 'her husband; and she cannot certainly 'make him appear infamous, without 'throwing a load of disgrace upon her-'self; for people will always be ready 'to imagine, that she herself must be 'guilty of some imprudence, which she 'dare not discover, that gave rise to the 'vices and injuries she so warmly ex-'claims against.'

'You are much in the right, my dear,' returned my aunt; 'and I am very glad 'to hear you have such just sentiments, 'since I hope they will influence your 'own conduct, if ever you should be in 'circumstances to require it.'

This conversation, which was drawn out to a considerable length, took up our time till we arrived at my aunt's. But I must not omit one particular, which indeed is too agreeable for me to con-ceal; which was, that Lucius and his sister had each of them a fortune of five thousand pounds left them by a relation, who died a few months ago.

You see, Madam, with what confi-dence I lay open the disadvantageous circumstances of a family in whose hap-piness I interest myself; and can I give you a more convincing proof of the sin-cerity of my friendship? My father, not-withstanding his natural generosity, and tenderness for me, will never, I am afraid, consent to my entering into an alliance so extremely beneath what my fortune may seem to require. I tremble at the thought of disobliging him; and am resolved, whatever it cost me, to con-form myself to his will. However, I may be mistaken. It is possible that a prospect of my happiness may outweigh all consideration of meaner interests and advantages.

Forgive me now, if you can, for troubling you with these melancholy thoughts, which I endeavour in vain to suppress. While this is the case, you

must not wonder at my dulness, which, in my opinion, is less pardonable than impertinence, since the one may possibly make you smile at least, while the other can have no better effect than to give you the vapours, which if you can escape after reading this heavy epistle, I shall not despair of seeing you in my condition; that is, frequently amusing yourself with a dull walk, amidst dull trees, dull fields, and talking to your duller self. But Heaven preserve you from such a change: and may you ever think me, as I really am, in spite of love, vapours, and melancholy,

Your sincere FRIEND.

The moment I had written the first letter of that dear expressive word *friend;* by which I would always have you understand, whenever I make use of it, a thousand nameless ideas of affection, sympathy, and whatever you can imagine else most agreeable and endearing; I say, at the very instant as I was concluding my letter, I heard Amelia enter my room; when, turning my head, she told me, with a smile, that the amiable Marilla was just come to pay us a visit: then immediately forgetting what I was about, I arose with a heart full of joy, threw down my pen, and ran to embrace the sister of my dear——no, that is too fond; agreeable, I should say—well, then, of my agreeable Lucius. We had a great deal of chat upon abundance of entertaining topicks; while my desire of engaging the friendship of this lady made me discover an unusual gaiety; or rather, the friendship I had already conceived for her threw off all my restraint, and made me treat her with the same open satisfaction as if I had been convinced that she had already entertained the same friendship for me; so that in a little time we grew as intimate as if our acquaintance had been of long standing. No reserve, no diffidence, no restraint, subsisted between us; all our behaviour was frankness, vivacity, and the utmost extent of sprightly freedom. You yourself, my dear Charlotte, (forgive me saying so) had you unexpectedly come to see me, could hardly have made a greater change in the situation of my mind. How swift a progress does friendship make, when a person begins with such dispositions! A desire of being agreeable is the readiest way of making ourselves so.

My aunt had not only invited this lady to see us at our last visit, but hearing me express an extreme desire of enjoying that satisfaction at our return, sent the next day a letter to her mamma, unknown to me, to desire her to permit her to stay a day or two at our house: a favour that I could not help being highly sensible of, and from which you may judge of the pains she takes to make my stay in the country agreeable to me.

My new companion and I, not contented with engrossing almost all the conversation to ourselves, resolved to take a little turn in the fields, to indulge our young friendship with discoursing on some subjects not proper for a mixed company; and therefore, finding an opportunity of leaving our companions, we slipped into the garden, and from thence went into a retired walk, where we might lay open our hearts without the least restraint. A gentle breeze that whispered among the trees, the fragrance of the air, and the awful silence of the evening, contributed to soften my mind, and charm my senses. The

——Twilight grey
Had in her solemn livery all things clad?
——*While* the moon,
Rising in clouded majesty——
Apparent queen, unveil'd her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.
MILTON.

We walked slowly on, at first discoursing upon indifferent subjects, till the amiable Marilla mentioned her brother, and told me he desired her to present his humble respects to me. This gave me an opportunity of asking how he did, and happily introduced a conversation more interesting than can well be conceived. 'I fancy, Miss,' said I, 'you must be very happy in the friendship and tenderness of this gentleman: he seems possessed of extraordinary merit.'—'Ah, Madam,' returned she, 'I am more happy than can be imagined. He has an extreme affection for me; and there subsists such a harmony between us, as is very rarely seen in such near relations. It is his chief study to improve my mind; and he has taken inconceivable pains in giving me those just principles of virtue, which, I hope, will always influence my conduct. I find in him not only a brother, but a sincere and affectionate friend. We have but one common interest.

'interest. He trusts me with the secrets 'of his heart; and, in short, we are so 'closely united, that were I unhappy, 'he would feel as much for me as per-'haps I should for myself.'—'Well, 'my dear,' replied I, (endeavouring still to discover whether she was acquainted with his passion) 'I could almost envy 'you the pleasure of enjoying these 'dear social delights. I never knew 'what it was to have a brother; 'and, if I had, I might have been a 'stranger to your happiness. There 'are very few such brothers and sisters as 'you.' Here I pressed her hand with much affection, charmed with the engaging idea she had given me of her own felicity. She was some minutes before she replied, and perhaps was at a loss for an answer; however, at last, recovering herself—'Dear Miss,' said she, 'I assure you it is an addition to my 'happiness, to find that you entertain 'such favourable sentiments of us. 'Lucius would be transported with joy, 'if he could have heard from your lips 'that he has any share in your esteem: 'It is true, he has some merit, a great 'deal more than I can boast of, since I 'owe great part of mine to him; yet 'you are pleased to honour me with 'your friendship, while he——' She here appeared pretty much confused; and, as if at a loss how to proceed, stopped and stood silent: but at last, seeming to recollect herself, instead of going on, she resumed—'Had he a fortune equal to 'yours, he would perhaps be better 'able to tell you himself those tender 'sentiments which swell his heart.'—'Has Lucius, then,' replied I with an innocent tone, and an air of astonishment, 'any sentiments which he is 'afraid to discover to me? I can scarcely 'believe it, though you yourself are 'pleased to tell me so. However, I 'have so just an opinion of his virtue 'and fine sense, that I hardly think him 'capable of saying any thing disagree-'able.'—'And may I tell him this?' replied Marilla, in a kind of extasy. 'Why not?' returned I; 'it would be 'a great misfortune, if we were never 'to be honoured with any company but 'such as were upon a level with us 'with respect to fortune. A pride of 'this kind would be the greatest curse; 'since there are innumerable blessings in life infinitely more valuable than 'all the advantages that can procure us. 'The charms of a virtuous and upright 'mind are internal; they constitute a 'real merit, and reflect a glory upon 'the possessor; a glory, in comparison 'of which all other advantages are 'superficial and trifling.'

We were here interrupted by Amelia, who saw us go into the garden, and perceiving us at some distance, came running to rejoin us. With her we presently returned home: and Marilla leaving us the next day, I have nothing farther to add, than that I am, dear Madam, yours most affectionately,

FELICIA.

LETTER VI.

DEAR CHARLOTTE,

NOTWITHSTANDING the friendly congratulations you give me upon the late acquisition of fortune I received by the death of my uncle, I can assure you, with the utmost sincerity, that it gives me little or no pleasure. This, I believe, will surprize you, since, as you justly observe, I cannot be supposed to grieve for the loss of a gentleman I have never seen, and who consequently cannot have endeared himself to me by any of those proofs of affection we may receive from persons we frequently converse with: nor would I have you believe that I am such a perfect Stoick as to be absolutely insensible of the grandeur, the riches, and honours, of life. These, it must be confessed, have seducing charms, and are apt to intoxicate our minds with the most pleasing prospects of future bliss: they naturally swell the imagination with high-wrought scenes of delight; nor can one of my age receive them without feeling some engaging ideas of that homage, that respectful awe, which so agreeably flatters our vanity. That darling foible of youth, Gold, whose sovereign charms are universally felt, attracts every heart; all are delighted with the advantages it procures. The grave philosopher too often sacrifices at this shrine; and the more devout priest, who with such eloquence harangues on Sundays upon the contempt of riches, and with such force of expression, exhorts us to contemn the transitory enjoyments of life, those vanities, those baubles, those unsatisfying and pestilential goods, in spite of all his opprobrious epithets, is still captivated

by this magick; and, perhaps, there are few among them that would look with ſuch inſenſibility on the acquiſition of ten thouſand pounds as I do.

After this long preamble, you poſſibly begin to wonder what I would be at; and are ready perhaps to imagine that I am either very vain, or elſe that, pleaſed too much with the ſolitude of a country-life, I am become a ſort of female hermit. But neither of theſe is the caſe.

I have not yet excluded all thoughts of making a gay appearance in life; nor do I find any charms in ſuch a retirement as would deprive me of an opportunity of being ſerviceable to my fellow-creatures, and enjoying thoſe ſocial pleaſures, which are ſome of the greateſt ſweeteners of life. But to be ſincere; this long piece of ſlander, which may at firſt ſight appear ſo injurious to the honour of philoſophers and prieſts, (I beg the clergy's pardon, prieſts and philoſophers I ſhould ſay, ſince the ſacred character of the gown-men demands that I ſhould give them the preference) this piece of ſlander, I ſay, was only introduced to raiſe your curioſity.

Ah! my Lucius, can I taſte the ſweets of a fortune, which will doubtleſs be a bar to my happineſs, and render it impoſſible for me to be thine! This is a reflection which damps all my joy. Alas! how weak is ambition, when compared to love!

The day after Marilla left me, I had the pleaſure of ſeeing her brother. He had an air of unuſual ſatisfaction in his look; and perhaps encouraged by the repetition ſhe had doubtleſs made him of that converſation I related in my laſt, in which I ſo freely confeſſed my regard for him, he ſpoke, methought, with leſs diffidence; his behaviour was more polite; his manner leſs conſtrained; while a thouſand tender nameleſs graces, which I had never diſcovered before, rendered him ſtill dearer to my heart. I now felt myſelf inſenſibly awed by his preſence; and in proportion as he became more unconſtrained, I grew more thoughtful. I would gladly have reſumed my uſual gaiety, but it was impoſſible; the company of my aunt and couſins become burthenſome, and I began to fear their diſcovering in my eyes that flow of tender friendſhip, that dear tranſporting extaſy, which ſwelled my breaſt. To recover myſelf from this ſweet diſorder, I haſtily aroſe, and retired into the garden, where I gave a looſe to reflection without fear of being obſerved. I then began to revolve in my mind the danger of indulging a paſſion which would probably prove fatal to my repoſe, ſince I could not have the leaſt proſpect of it's ever being countenanced by my father's approbation. I therefore blamed myſelf; and, after a long debate, reſolved to uſe all my endeavours to conquer my growing weakneſs: but I had hardly formed this reſolution when I ſaw Lucius enter the garden. I was then ſitting in an arbour covered with woodbines, whoſe flowers embalmed the whiſpering breezes with a pleaſing fragrance. He ſaw me, and immediately approaching with an air of reſpect, aſked me if his company would not be a diſagreeable interrupting of my ſolitude? I replied, that as my thoughts were only engaged on trifles, it would be no pain to me to place them upon more agreeable ſubjects. 'But why, 'Sir,' added I, ſmiling, 'have you left 'the ladies?'—'I am obliged to return 'home, ſaid he; 'and your aunt hav-'ing this minute received a letter, I 'took the opportunity, while ſhe was 'reading it, of coming to take leave of 'you.'

I had now entirely forgotten the reſolution I had juſt taken to arm my heart with inſenſibility; and filled with a ſoft and pleaſing ſurprize at the unexpected company of my lover, even a letter from London could not awaken the leaſt curioſity, though I did not doubt it's coming from my father. Lucius now ſat down by me upon a bank of camomile which almoſt ſurrounded the arbour, when I expected every moment to hear him enter upon the moſt delightful ſubject, love; but though he was more aſſured than ever I had ſeen him, the reſtraints of a modeſt diffidence ſtill tied his tongue, and made him for ſome time preſerve a ſilence which I did not care to interrupt. He opened his lips ſeveral times, but, quivering with fear, they inſtantly cloſed without uttering a ſyllable; but at laſt ſeeming to collect all his fortitude—'Forgive me, Miſs,' ſaid he, giving me a look inexpreſſibly tender; 'forgive a behaviour, which 'doubtleſs makes me appear extremely 'ridiculous; but it is impoſſible to——' Here he caſt down his eyes, with a ſigh, while a flood of ſoft and melting ideas ſeemed to choak up his voice; but at length,

length, finding I waited to hear him conclude, he lifted up his head, when I saw his face covered with a deep blush, while every feature was expressive of the most violent emotions. 'How impossible 'is it, dear Madam,' resumed he, with a faultering voice, 'to give utterance to 'a passion too tender to be described— 'and too—too presumptuous to be for- 'given,' added he, with a look and tone that spoke the deepest despair.

During this speech, which, short as it was, took up a considerable time, methought I felt all the throbbings of his heart. I seemed conscious of all that dread, that love, and all those terrible apprehensions, which bewildered his thoughts in a maze of confusion, and made him tremble at a discovery which, though he resolved to make, he dreaded the effects it might produce. But notwithstanding this sympathetick penetration, and all the disturbance it had a natural tendency to create, the very cause of my pain was the source of the tenderest and most exquisite pleasure, the softest and most soothing delight. As soon as he concluded, he waited for my reply in a kind of agonizing suspence; but though I was a moment at a loss how to return an answer, I suffered my eyes to express a pity and compassion capable of dispersing his most alarming fears, had he dared to have lifted up his to observe them. But when I spoke, a glance immediately met mine, which instantly brightening, seemed to discover my meaning before I could give it utterance. 'I assure you, Sir,' said I in a mild tone, 'that I am not at all 'disposed to increase your confusion by 'ridiculing the painful disorder which 'has accompanied this too tender de- 'claration. I am sensible of your merit, 'and don't think you capable of an at- 'tempt to deceive me. Believe me, Sir, 'I look upon you as my friend, and 'therefore entreat you to reflect a little 'upon the obstacles that will inevitably 'oppose your wishes. However, I 'freely confess, if that will give you 'any satisfaction, that were I at my 'own disposal, you would perhaps have 'no reason to complain of my severity.'

You cannot conceive, my dear Charlotte, what a sudden change this obliging reply made upon the countenance and behaviour of my lover. You are now ready to imagine that I shall describe him throwing himself at my feet, while with a flow of rapture he admires my superlative goodness, blending his praises with two or three hundred adorables, transcendent excellencies, infinite perfections, incomparable creatures, and abundance of other fine things of the same strain. But if these are your thoughts, you are extremely mistaken; for I did not hear him utter the least syllable of this sublime nonsense. He is too good a Christian to deify his mistress, and has too good an opinion of me to think I should be pleased with such senseless homage. In short, in spite of his humility, his love was incapable of blinding him so far as to make him forget that I was a very woman still, a being of the same species with himself; and therefore he neither debased himself, nor attempted to please me with flattering praises.

After all, I am terribly afraid that I shall be unable to give you any tolerable idea of the conclusion of this affecting scene. The dreadful agitations, which were before so visible in every feature of his face, were now instantly changed to those of joy; a thick cloud, that covered his eyes, in a moment dispersed; they sparkled with unusual brightness; while gratitude and love, surprize and extasy, appeared in swift succession on his countenance, and painted there all the emotions of his heart. As despair had before kept him silent, the contrary passion had now the same effect; but, as soon as he recovered his voice, giving me a look of tender surprize and delight—'O my 'Felicia!' cried he, in a most moving tone; and then, after a pause of half a minute—'O my dear Felicia, have I 'not offended you? Am I so happy, 'so exquisitely happy, as to have ob- 'tained your esteem?'—'Yes, Sir,' returned I, with an affected sprightliness, and endeavouring at the same time to conceal the tenderness of my looks by holding down my head, 'I have a very 'great esteem for you, but not a greater 'than I am persuaded you will always 'deserve. But come,' added I with a sigh, which for my life I could not conceal, 'let us go to my aunt; this 'conversation grows too tender.'

Here I arose without waiting for an answer, while he followed me, at the same time begging my pardon, and saying he had forgot to tell me, that my aunt, seeing him go into the garden, desired him to let me know that she had

something

something to say to me, which she fancied would not be disagreeable. This news put me in mind of the letter he had mentioned; and therefore fearing she might think me long, and perhaps form some suspicion at seeing us together, I desired him to make haste before, and tell her I was coming: but I had no sooner made this request, than I stumbled at the handle of a roller which reached to the border of the path; when seizing my hand to help me, (though I was in no danger of a fall) he squeezed it with an air of tenderness; and, without seeming to know what he did, suddenly pressed it to his bosom, giving me a look at the same time so inexpressibly soft and moving, that I could not help being extremely affected by it: and indeed my cheeks were immediately covered with a blush; nor could I forbear giving a sigh, though I endeavoured all along to conceal these proofs of my sensibility. But, the moment he took my hand from his breast, confounded at this sudden impulse of passion, which I believe would not permit him to think of what he did, he gave me a look which seemed to ask forgiveness, and, trembling, held my fingers with a fearful, easy timidity; but finding I seemed not to observe him, and that I discovered no marks of resentment, joy again appeared in his looks, and he conducted me in the same manner to the house, with an air of extasy and delight. Nor, indeed, was I less happy than he: I easily comprehended the source of every pleasing impulse; and could with the same satisfaction have pressed his hand too, had not the laws of prudence and modest reserve forbid it.

It is well the prude I mentioned to you in one of my former letters is not to see this, for these last lines would have made her lose all her patience: but surely it can be no crime to act from nature, when virtue is our rule; and I am sure it is none frankly to confess the innocent transports of our hearts to a friend. But if these natural sensations were indeed criminal, they soon suffered a shock that gave me no little pain.

We entered the house with our minds filled with all the soothing ideas that could flow from a concourse of the most delightful thoughts, when he let go my hand, and walked in before me; but my aunt no sooner saw me, than she cried out, with an air that discovered her own satisfaction, and, at the same time, let me see that she was pleased at thinking it in her power to contribute to mine—'Come, my dear,' said she, 'I wish 'you joy.' Here Amelia and Polly paid me the same compliment, and, at the same instant, came running, in a friendly transport, to embrace me; when, at last, putting an end to their caresses; filled with an eager curiosity—'Why do 'you wish me joy, Madam?' cried I to my aunt; 'pray explain yourself; 'have you a letter from London?'—'Yes, child,' returned she, in an extasy; 'and your father tells me, that 'your uncle in the East-Indies has left 'you no less a sum than ten thousand 'pounds. How!' added she, 'are you 'not pleased with the news! Are there 'no charms in being a rich heiress! 'What an extravagant fortune are you 'like to have!' I now put on a forced smile, to prevent my giving her the mortification of seeing how coldly I received what she with reason imagined such a subject of joy. And indeed, I could not have behaved otherwise without betraying the dearest secrets of my heart. At the mention of ten thousand pounds, I had been unable to disguise that thoughtfulness which was suddenly spread over my face—a painful thoughtfulness, that was caused by the reflection, had it but been Lucius that he had bestowed it upon, O then I might have had a better prospect of being happy! Can I receive any satisfaction from a circumstance that widens still farther the distance between him and me? Here casting my eyes upon him, I found still greater reason to be filled with dislike at this painful, splendid acquisition. He stood with his face towards me, leaning upon the back of a chair; his eyes were cast down with a dejected confusion; then lifting them up to the cieling with an air of despair, I perceived his face pale, a tear rolling down his cheeks, which he endeavoured to conceal, by hastily pulling out his handkerchief, and walking to the door; when, having staid there a minute to recover himself, he suddenly took leave to return home.

What various, what strong, what cruel emotions was I now obliged to conceal! But this was not all, I was constrained to assume a gay appearance; Torturing deceit! I never felt a more painful situation, nor ever sure was an innocent disguise accompanied with such cruel

cruel anguish. I made these observations on Lucius's behaviour, while I seemed to be reading the letter which my aunt had given me; and though I began it again as soon as he left us, I read it over without knowing a word it contained, except my being assured that what my aunt had told was but too true.

You now see, my dear, what reason I have to be dissatisfied with what you have esteemed a subject of joy. Vain are all the prospects of advantage we fondly flatter ourselves with from the acquisition of wealth, the alluring prospects of gay magnificence, the splendid appearances of ostentatious grandeur, while a thousand thwarting and controuling accidents can damp our highest and most raised expectations, and change the very objects of our delight into the most painful disquiets, the bitterest sources of discontent and trouble. But I find I am running on in a reflection, which, if I was to indulge it, might carry me to a tedious length; I shall therefore break off in time, and conclude with desiring you, Madam, to form an idea, if you can, of that affection with which I subscribe myself, your sincerest friend,

FELICIA.

LETTER VII.

DEAR MADAM,

THE interest you take in the unhappy situation of Lucius's affairs, and your obliging concern for the opposition you fear my father will make to my happiness, are such endearing proofs of your friendship, that I could not read your last letter without feeling my breast glow with the most charming mixture of delight and affection: and indeed what higher satisfaction can we feel than that which naturally springs from the approbation of a friend, in an affair so tender, and so peculiarly interesting as that on which we fancy all our happiness is founded! The very passion you approve, is obliged to return the obligation; and it does so in the most effectual manner, by transferring some of it's tender feelings to the person who thus sympathizes in it's dearest sensations.

In spite of the improbability of my father's ever being brought to approve our mutual affection, I could not think of losing Lucius, and banishing all thoughts of our future felicity, without a very painful affliction. I was willing to see him still, though I ought rather to have avoided his sight as much as possible, since his company could be of no other service, than to strengthen a passion too deeply rooted in my heart. The admonitions of reason were of little effect; I was not disposed to listen to them: a more prevailing impulse made me long to see him; and not hearing from him for four tedious days, I wished with the greatest ardour for an opportunity of letting him know, that the new addition to my fortune had not made me less worthy of his esteem. This I fancied I ought to do in justice to myself, and formed abundance of plausible reasons, which made it appear absolutely necessary that I should thus set my own character in a true light. 'After the hopes I have already given him,' said I to myself, 'can I suffer 'him to continue in an error so injurious 'to my tenderness, and even to my reputation too, as to think me of a soul 'so sordid, as to be puffed up with the 'advantages of superior wealth; to 'think I can retract the encouragement 'I have given him, and to believe that, 'elated with pride, I can now regard 'him with an air of superiority and contempt? No, I can't bear that my dear 'Lucius should entertain an opinion of 'me which I so little deserve; he shall 'know that, if we must be separated, it 'is not my choice, but a cruel force, 'that renders it necessary. He shall 'know that I am still the same, that I 'am still as sensible of his merit as ever; 'and that, were I at my own disposal, 'not all the riches of the universe could 'bribe me to entertain a thought fatal 'to his peace and happiness. But how,' said I, recollecting myself, 'shall I have 'an opportunity of undeceiving him? 'Does he not deprive me of the power 'of doing myself justice? His fears prevent my giving him the satisfaction of 'making him those assurances, which, 'if I may judge of his tenderness by 'my own, would be highly agreeable 'to him. What then shall I do? Shall 'I write? No, I can never consent to 'that; it would be too forward, and 'discover too great a fondness, for me 'to make the first advances. Suppose 'I write to Marilla; and let her know 'the struggle of contending passions, 'which fill my mind with such a mul-

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'titude of various solicitudes, and tender perplexities. Would not that be 'the same as writing to him, since she 'would doubtless shew him her letter? 'But suppose I desire her to keep it a 'secret, what then will he be the better 'for it? he will still be as ignorant of 'my thoughts as ever. Well, then, it will 'be to no purpose to write at all.' Here I fixed, and resolved to leave him ignorant of all that I desired he should know, till a favourable opportunity offered, that would permit me to discover my sentiments in a less exceptionable manner; and I did not doubt but my aunt's friendship for him would soon lay before me an occasion of doing it, since she was too much pleased with his company and Marilla's, to dispense with their frequently giving her the satisfaction of enjoying their conversation.

These reflections I made in my chamber; when having at last resolved to arm myself with patience, I went down, and conversed with Amelia for some minutes; but finding a tender melancholy grew upon my spirits, I sought for an opportunity of indulging it. And indeed, when we are in this disposition, the company of the most agreeable friends becomes burthensome: I therefore gave her the slip, and retired into the fields, to indulge at large the soothing softness of my own ideas.

You smile, my dear Charlotte, at seeing me become such an unsociable creature, as to prefer my own company to that of a friend. What a strange thing is love! But though I am grown infinitely fond of talking to myself, and walking under the shady covert of oaks and elms, yet I am not so perfect a lover as to hold a discourse with these inanimate beings; nor have I ever had the least inclination to carve the name of Lucius upon their barks. I am not yet arrived to that degree of madness; nor indeed have I observed, in any of my rambles, any such lasting marks of my lover's extravagance.

I had not long enjoyed my retirement, when I saw a man crossing the neighbouring fields with precipitation; he at last came up to me, and with abundance of awkward scrapes, after having asked my name, gave me a letter, and immediately retired. As soon as he was gone, I cast my eyes around, to see if any body observed me; and, full of a curiosity which would not suffer me to stay till I got to my chamber, seated myself upon a bank of turf at the foot of a shady tree which sufficiently concealed me, when hastily breaking open the letter, I had the satisfaction of seeing that it came from my dear Lucius. How tender and generous were his sentiments! how affectionate!—But the confidence which subsists between us, gives you a right to see the letter itself. I will therefore transcribe it; and I am sure, if you have the least idea of my affection for this amiable youth, you will not be surprized, if I declare that I was charmed with it. But, without any farther preamble, I found it as follows—

'MADAM,

'IT is with the utmost confusion that 'I reflect upon your being a witness of the disorder I discovered at your 'aunt's, at what ought rather to be a 'subject of joy. My hand trembles 'while I attempt to apologize for my 'behaviour. What words can I make 'use of to discover the sincerity, the 'ardour, the tender delicacy of my 'passion, when I have given you such 'reason to believe that it is the basest, 'the most mean, and selfish? when I 'have given you such cause to think, 'that I have lost in myself, in the mean 'consideration of my own happiness, 'the tender regard which I ought to 'have for yours? But, O consider the 'towering hopes to which you had raised me! Consider the charming, the 'extatick flood of joy, which in a full 'tide of transporting rapture raised me 'above myself, and seemed to promise a 'felicity vastly beyond what my vainest 'thoughts could have aspired to! Think 'but of the delight that must swell my 'heart, at being raised from the most 'gloomy despair of timorous love, to 'the unexpected extasy of seeing my 'fears vanish; of experiencing all the 'rapturous sweets of the most charming 'passion; all the joy that could flow 'from the most exquisite goodness, the 'most endearing condescension: and 'then, if it be possible, do but think of 'what I must feel, at finding, in one 'moment, my high-wrought felicity 'overturned, and myself thrown down 'from the eminence of my aspiring 'joys!

'Forgive, dear Madam, my endeavouring thus to extenuate a behaviour, 'which

'which has discovered too great a regard for my happiness, too little for yours. If it has appeared ungenerous and mercenary, nothing but surprize can excuse it, and nothing but surprize could make me in this case guilty of a conduct that makes it necessary for me to beg pardon. I have now conquered myself, and sincerely congratulate you with the rest of your friends; while, with a heart overflowing with your felicity, I forget my own miseries. But why do I mention misery? I shall have none while you are blessed: your happiness shall be mine too. All my satisfaction and delight shall spring from the pleasing contemplation of yours. What a delightful source of the noblest joy! I lose the too presumptuous title of your lover in that of your friend; and may I in that character have the sweet, the dear satisfaction, of seeing you as lastingly happy as my fondest wishes would make you! May your virtue, with all those numberless, those nameless graces, which make even that and religion appear with diviner charms, give you all those pure and noble delights, which it is not in the power of wealth to bestow! and may both together render you the happiest of mortals!

'But whither would my tender imagination carry me? I could dwell for ever on this delightful subject. My heart, warmed with your dear idea, would endeavour to make you sensible of what it feels for you. But how vast a disproportion is there between the swell of melting thought and the flatness of words! they were formed to convey mere vulgar conceptions, or, at most, emotions less strong and affecting: I therefore want a thousand nameless epithets to express the force of my friendship, the delightful impulses of my soul. But think not, dear Madam, that I have only gained a victory over a weak and feeble passion. Did you know with what a vast excess I have loved, you might perhaps form some idea of that painful struggle it has cost me to conquer the most ardent affection, and reduce it to the disinterested standard of that more sober one which becomes a friend. But I beg pardon for my impertinence, which I am afraid has both tired and offended you; and therefore beg leave to subscribe myself, Madam, your sincerest, and most devoted friend,

'LUCIUS.'

As soon as I had run over the above letter, a sudden impulse of tenderness made me press it to my lips with a most pleasing extasy.—Nay, you may laugh as much as you please; I kissed, I say, the dear character with a transport of delight; kissed the senseless paper; and having pressed it to my heart, and secured it in that situation, I arose and hasted to my chamber, in order to peruse it more at my leisure. I there read it over several times, but could not help reflecting how much pleasure I lost by that painful awe, which prevented his uttering the melting softness of his heart when in my presence. With what extasy should I have heard such tender things from his lips, especially when assisted with the moving tone of his voice, and the more elegant language of his expressive countenance! I should then have been all rapture. However, I at last resolved to write an answer; when, after having blotted and scrawled over about half a dozen sheets of paper without being able to please myself, I was obliged to lay aside my design.

I could not divest myself of that softness which his epistle had inspired me with; all my efforts to this purpose proved ineffectual. A pleasing languor, which hung upon my spirits, gave me such a sweet lethargy of thought, as rendered it impossible for me to express any other sentiments than those of my heart; and they were indeed too tender to be communicated, especially to a lover who wanted my father's approbation to give a sanction to his passion. The next morning, however, I was more composed; and therefore wrote the following letter, which I have not yet had an opportunity of sending to him.

'POOR LUCIUS!

'WERE I disposed to triumph over the weakness of a lover, who in humble strains of soft complaint lays himself at my mercy, I should perhaps find subject enough in your epistle to rally your passion, as well as your pretended victory over it. But I have at present no inclination to indulge such a savage gaiety, since it

'would probably give you pain. The flow 'of tender sentiments, the delicacy of 'passion, which makes you desire that 'I should still preserve my esteem for 'you, and your disinterested and warm 'concern for my happiness, are so many 'proofs of your generosity and intrinsick 'merit, that I cannot help feeling a very 'sensible pleasure every time I reflect 'upon them. Your confusion at my 'good fortune, which I confess I took 'particular notice of, was too natural 'for me to be very much offended at it; 'and indeed, I have rather pitied than 'blamed your distress. The advantages 'we receive from wealth, are as superficial, I believe, as any we enjoy; and 'while they deprive us of that sincerity 'and unreserved freedom, that openness of behaviour, which persons in 'inferior circumstances receive from 'their friends, they strip us of the most 'engaging sweets of life; blessings, 'which not all the luxury of incumbering magnificence and studied splendor, 'not all the homage of empty ceremony 'and servile submission, can atone for 'the want of. You see, Sir, I can moralize like any philosopher, and you 'may possibly flatter yourself that you 'have taught me this doctrine. Do so 'if you please. I own my regard for 'you; and, however romantick the Platonick friendship you propose may appear, I readily accept of it, since that 'is all that either you or I ought to hope 'for. With my sincere respect to my 'good friend, your sister, I am, Sir, 'yours, &c.

'FELICIA.'

How many tender and affecting sentiments was I here obliged to suppress! I was afraid of discovering the secrets of my heart, though he would doubtless be transported to find that I was as capable of love as himself, and that he had inspired me with all that softness that could flow from the most passionate affection. But to you I have discovered all my weakness, and depend upon your friendship and good nature to keep it an inviolable secret, especially from my father, whose goodness I am resolved never to abuse by the least act of disobedience. I am, dear Charlotte, in spite of love, or any other rival passion, most sincerely yours,

FELICIA.

LETTER VIII.

MADAM,

THE satisfaction you discovered, at the little conversation-piece I gave you some account of, in one of my former letters, makes me glad of an opportunity to vary my subject, and leave the tender tale of love for a theme which even one of your gay disposition will, I am sure, think equally entertaining and instructive.

The day after I sent you my last, we had the pleasure of receiving a visit from Mr. Stevens, the facetious old gentleman whose character you are pretty well acquainted with. The afternoon was spent very agreeably; but before he took leave, my aunt, who still takes all imaginable pains to contribute to my satisfaction, by diversifying my amusements, proposed our making a short excursion the next day to a nobleman's seat at no great distance from us. 'I 'have observed,' said she, smiling, 'that my niece appears very much delighted with this part of the country; 'she seems fond of agreeable landscapes; 'and my desire of retaining her here as 'long as possible, makes me willing to 'gratify this taste, by shewing her such 'as I don't doubt but she will think 'both surprizing and agreeable. Will 'you, Sir, contribute to her satisfaction 'and ours, by giving us your company 'to-morrow? We are apt to be weary in 'the company of those we daily converse 'with; but a friend of your facetious turn 'will enliven our conversation, and find us 'constant matter for exercising our wit, 'and rendering us even more agreeable 'to ourselves.' Mr. Stevens replied to this compliment in a very handsome manner; and at the same time added greatly to the pleasure I had in prospect, by saying, that if it would not be disagreeable, he would increase our number, by bringing Lucius, and another friend with him, whose company he fancied would make our satisfaction compleat: when my aunt replied for us all, that we gladly accepted his offer, and that she was sure the gentleman's being his friend would be a sufficient recommendation to us.

The next day before dinner we had the pleasure of seeing our old friend return, accompanied by a young clergyman his relation, who had just finished his

his ſtudies at Cambridge, and the engaging Lucius. Our repaſt was ſhort; and that being over, we ſet out in two coaches, Mr. Stevens's, and my aunt's. But I ſhall not attempt to give a particular deſcription of all the new and uncommon proſpects which diſcover themſelves in this delightful part of the country, where nature with a liberal hand pours out her favours, and with a profuſion of frolick bounty, ſpreads a wildneſs equally extravagant and pleaſing. I paſs over the beautiful landſcapes we drove through in this agreeable tour, for no other reaſon than becauſe the view I had of them was too ſudden to render me capable of deſcribing them; beſides, were it poſſible for me to do it to advantage, their being ſo perfectly extraordinary might reflect a little upon my veracity, and make you imagine that my deſcriptions were too uncommon to have any real exiſtence in nature.

Are you not ſurprized now, my dear Charlotte, that I can all this while forbear ſpeaking of my dear Lucius, ſince there is certainly a very exquiſite pleaſure in talking of the man we love! But the reaſon of my not mentioning him was, that as he went in the other coach, he could only give me now and then a glance, which ſeemed to expreſs a troubleſome kind of diffidence and ſuſpence, which I fancied aroſe from his longing to know what reception I gave his letter, and a fear leſt he had inſerted any thing in it that had offended me. At laſt, however, arriving at the park of my Lord M***, we by common conſent agreed to walk to the houſe. As ſoon as I ſtepped out of the coach, I could not help being extremely delighted with the agreeable ſcene which lay before us, and which I cannot for my life help giving you ſome deſcription of. Here the intermixture of duſky groves, and lightſome plains; of woods impervious to the rays of the ſun, which now ſpread his chearing beams around us, and the agreeable openings which diſcovered the bounding deer flying to the covert of the ſhady thicket; preſented a landſcape the moſt pleaſingly rural, and worthy the attention of the moſt curious obſerver; while we found ourſelves at the entrance of a grand walk, which extending to a prodigious length, grew inſenſibly narrower, till cloſing in perſpective, the viſto ſeemed loſt in the grove, out of which aroſe, as if by enchantment, ſeveral lofty ſtone turrets, which I afterwards found were part of a magnificent Gothick edifice, built in a moſt extraordinary taſte. In ſhort, the whole ſcene, notwithſtanding it's being very delightful, had ſuch a romantick appearance, that for ſome minutes I could think of nothing but caſtles and embowering ſhades, ariſing ſpontaneouſly to the charms of muſick; of the work of fairies, and the power of necromancy.

The company was no ſooner joined, than, after ſome compliments from the gentlemen in the other coach, and their deſiring to know my opinion of the tour we had taken, we fell inſenſibly into moralizing on the various beauties of nature, and comparing the natural connection there is between the exterior arrangements of bodies, which are formed to delight our ſenſes, and the proportions of internal beauty, the propriety of action, and the native amiableneſs of an honeſt, generous, and upright mind. That as nature had carefully formed the various ſenſes with different powers, adapted to convey delight to the ſoul, from the multitude of outward beings which ſurround us; ſo ſhe had been no leſs careful in forming the mind with taſtes and paſſions for directing it's purſuit to objects capable of raiſing it to the ſublimeſt pleaſures; while thoſe pleaſures not only reſult from it's purity, but are the very means of exalting it to ſtill higher degrees of perfection and happineſs. 'What a delightful ſenſation 'does this azure dome give the eye!' ſaid Lucius, with an air extremely graceful: 'Could the earth be covered with a 'more beautiful cieling, or a finer ca- 'nopy? What a pleaſing verdure clothes 'the ground, while it meets the limits 'of the high arch of heaven with in- 'termingling ſhades! a beautiful carpet 'for man and beaſt! But, all lovely as 'this ſcene appears, how much does it 'fall ſhort of the nobler landſcape of the 'mind! The honeſt man, whenever he 'pleaſes to review his actions, and con- 'template the ſituation of his heart, per- 'ceives a pleaſing extaſy ariſing from 'every inſtance of his integrity. He 'ſees a ſymmetry even more tranſport- 'ingly beautiful than this of nature; 'a proportion and arrangement of paſ- 'ſions incomparably more pleaſing than 'all the various diſpoſitions of light and 'ſhade, of woods and paſture, of mur- 'muring ſprings and falling torrents.

'How vaſt the difference between the 'moſt lovely ſcenes which can ariſe 'from the modifications of matter in it's 'moſt compleat perfection, between the 'tones of the moſt melting and har-'monious accents, and the nicer and 'more delicate ſenſations of an approv-'ing conſcience! An engaging inſtance 'of the divine wiſdom and benevolence, 'in conſtituting the very means of ad-'vancing the happineſs of others the 'means of procuring the ſublimeſt plea-'ſures to ourſelves!'—'Very true,' re-joined the clergyman with a ſmile; 'but 'if we compare the divine congratula-'tions of reaſon, the tranquil ſweetneſs 'and internal ſatisfaction of the bene-'volent man, the patriot, the friend of 'mankind, with the ſordid pleaſure of 'the ſucceſsfully ambitious, the trick-'ing knave, the abandoned debauchée; 'how vaſt, how immenſe a diſpropor-'tion ſhall we find in the nature of their 'enjoyments! enjoyments as widely 'diſtant as the high-wrought pleaſures 'of a God, and the low gratifications of 'the moſt grovelling animal.'—'Well, 'but, gentlemen,' replied my aunt, laughing, and pulling the clergyman by the ſleeve, 'methinks you might be ſo 'polite, notwithſtanding the rapture 'which ſeems to carry you out of your-'ſelves, to allow us a ſmall ſhare in the 'converſation. I am of the ſame opi-'nion with you, that as reaſon alone 'raiſes the man above the brute, ſo the 'pleaſures ariſing in the mind from a 'reaſonable conduct, muſt be infinitely 'ſuperior to thoſe of a mere ſenſualiſt. 'But how ſhall we be able to perſuade 'theſe degenerate mortals to believe ſo? 'Though they have no notion of the 'pure enjoyments of the ſoul; though 'they are as loſt to reaſon, as the herd 'that ranges in the field, or wallows in 'the ſtye; and, in ſhort, though ſome of 'them have hardly any thing of the man 'but the outward ſhape; yet they ſtill 'aſſert the dignity of their nature, and 'would think it an affront to be put 'upon a level with their brethren of the 'grinning tribe, though their views, 'their deſires, their gratifications, appear 'to be the ſame.'—'Your obſervation 'is very juſt, Madam,' returned the clergyman; 'for it is not the external 'form which conſtitutes the man: 'brutes differ in ſhape; and were there 'any particular ſpecies of them found 'out with features, proportions, and 'complexions exactly reſembling ours, 'we ſhould without heſitation conſider 'them only as mere animals, while they 'wanted thoſe noble qualifications of 'the mind, reaſon and judgment. Man '(the loweſt order of rational beings) 'is only raiſed above them by his intel-'lectual faculties, by a light capable 'of directing his purſuits, and raiſing 'him to the ſublimeſt elevation of paſ-'ſion and ſentiment. Strip him of this, 'or, which is much the ſame to him, let 'it lie clouded and obſcured, what is 'he but a grovelling animal, without 'any of the real and diſtinguiſhing per-'fections of human nature? There is 'indeed this difference in the caſe, that 'man is a brute by choice, they by ne-'ceſſity: he voluntarily proſtitutes the 'noble powers of the ſoul, ſinks below 'the dignity of his being, and prefers 'the pleaſures of a mere animal to 'the manly entertainments of reaſon, 'the ſublime raptures of an angel. How 'ſhocked are we at the birth of a mon-'ſter, eſpecially if it has a likeneſs in 'any of it's features to one of thoſe 'creatures whom we juſtly regard as 'ſo much below us! We cannot here 'bear the leaſt reſemblance of the brute. 'Even the moſt bloody, the moſt har-'dened villain, is ſtruck with horror at 'this external depravity in one of his 'own offspring, and ſickens at the 'ſight; yet at the ſame time he can ſup-'port the more monſtrous diſproportion 'of his own corrupt and diſordered 'appetites.'—'Really,' replied Amelia, with a ſprightly air, 'I think the irra-'tional world are but little obliged 'to you for your compariſons: were 'they able to ſpeak for themſelves, they 'might very juſtly tell you, that they 'have no thoughts of luxury, pride, am-'bition, avarice, and the long train of 'enormities practiſed by mankind. The 'moſt ſavage and voracious animal never 'kills to encreaſe his wealth, or to open 'a way to grandeur. He ſlays to ſatisfy 'his hunger, or in a natural defence of 'his own life, or of thoſe whom he is 'prompted by inſtinct to preſerve.'

Lucius, perhaps influenced by an impulſe of benevolence, which would not ſuffer him to hear this ſtrong repreſentation of the vices of mankind without feeling ſome uneaſineſs, preſerved all this while a profound ſilence; but finding

finding they had done, he was going to make a reply, when I prevented him, by saying—'You were pleased, Sir, some 'time ago, to vindicate mankind from 'the charge of a natural depravity and 'propension to vice; and I must confess, 'that I was charmed with your reason-'ing, though what I have now heard 'makes me a little suspect it. You 'know, you endeavoured to prove from 'experience, that, so far from having 'any natural impulse to lead us on to 'vice, we had a moral sense implanted 'in the mind, directly calculated to 'spur us on to the most amiable heights 'of virtue; but how is this consistent 'with the picture that has been just 'given, in which, perhaps, the far 'greatest part of mankind is included? 'I freely confess, that your sentiments 'of the moral sense made such an im-'pression upon my mind, that I have 'considered it as a very favourite opi-'nion, and therefore have waited all 'this while in expectation of it's being 'brought into the subject, with which 'it seems to have some connection; but 'instead of that, reason alone has been 'mentioned; though I imagined, that 'those inward impulses to virtuous ac-'tions superseded the use of it. But both, 'I find, are insufficient for the happiness 'of mankind, since there is undoubt-'edly more vice than virtue in the 'world.'—'It must be acknowledged, 'Miss,' said Lucius, 'that there is too 'much reason for the disagreeable re-'presentation that has been made of a 'general depravity. The most sacred 'engagements are daily violated; friend-'ship and love, the most endearing 'bonds of society, are made a cloak to 'perpetrate the most execrable villainies, 'the ruin of innocence, the destruction 'of the unsuspecting and honest man. 'The traitor to his country assumes the 'honourable name of the patriot, and 'pretends to be struggling for liberty, 'while he is only paving the way to 'greatness, in order to riot in the spoils 'of his injured fellow-subjects. In short, 'whole orders and degrees of men seem 'infected with the dreadful contagion 'of vice, and a more than brutal disso-'luteness of manners. A dreadful 'spectacle indeed! a shocking depra-'vity, that must fill every generous mind 'with an affectionate pity and concern! 'But let us leave this gloomy, this disa-'greeable subject; and, with hearts 'warmed with a love of truth and vir-'tue, impartially enquire if vice is really 'so prevalent as, upon a superficial view, 'it appears to be; by which means, I 'hope, you will be convinced, that vir-'tue reigns more universally than vice; 'and that by the constitution of nature, 'mankind have, even in this imperfect 'state, more real, more exquisite hap-'piness than misery: an estimate of 'the utmost consequence both to the 'honour of human nature, and to de-'monstrate the wisdom and benevolence 'of that moral Being, who is the father 'of the human soul, and the invariable, 'inexhaustible source, of the most per-'fect and compleat goodness.

'In order then to form a right judg-'ment of mankind, not the band of 'ruffians, not the publick or private 'stews, not the gloomy dungeon filled 'with guilty wretchedness; but mankind 'in general must be the subject of our ex-'amination. We must extend our views, 'and glance upon the virtues and vices 'of all the known world: and here we 'shall find the greatest reason for an 'universal benevolence; we shall see 'with pleasure a noble simplicity of 'manners, and an integrity of heart, 'delightfully conspicuous amidst the 'barbarism of ignorance, the supersti-'tion of wild uncultivated nations. We 'shall see the same love of their country, 'the same tender sensibilities of friend-'ship, the same natural affection, the 'same reciprocal endearing offices of 'social life, among the far distant un-'polished savages, as among the polite 'and learned Europeans. Nature even 'here works strongly; virtue and vice 'have names in all languages; and so 'deeply is the image of the Deity im-'pressed upon universal nature, that 'every rational being has in general 'the same sense of an obligation, the 'same delightful sensations arising from 'the consideration of the native and 'intrinsick excellence of actions benefi-'cent, disinterested and generous.

'Let us next consider if the usual 'manner of forming a judgment of pri-'vate actions be consistent with truth 'and equity. While the mind, like the 'eye, can only glance on the surface of 'things, we can have but a very narrow 'view of the springs and motives which 'actuate even our dearest friends, and 'most intimate acquaintance. How in-'capable then are we to form a just

'opinion

'opinion of the actions of those whose passions, whose inclinations and peculiar turn of mind, we are entirely unacquainted with! We are free in our censures; we precipitately blame the conduct of others; yet, however certain we may think the judgment is which we pass upon their conduct, a little time often convinces us, that our conclusion was formed merely upon fallacious appearances; and that we judged of the motive, not from the action it was really formed to produce, but from the false and deceitful light it appeared in to us: a consideration that should kill at once all disposition to calumny and censoriousness, the blackest and most ignominious of all vices. Thus it frequently happens, that those actions which, at first view, seem vicious, upon a more strict examination, appear to be strictly virtuous; and from this experience of the erroneousness of our judgments, and that the truth of the case, when discovered, generally leans to the side of virtue, it will not sure be thought unreasonable to conclude that it is generally so in other instances; and that if the real spring and motive to action was considered, virtue would preponderate, and her votaries be even more numerous than the votaries of vice.

'The moral sense, Madam, is a taste for what is amiable; that distinguishing faculty of the mind which makes us *feel*, sensibly and strongly *feel*, the harmony and discord of actions. It is the *touch*, the *ear* of the soul; while reason is the *eye* to regulate the exertions of this sympathetick faculty. The moral sense feels instantaneously, without waiting for the slow deliberation of the rational powers, to know if it ought to do so: while reason is given us to reign supreme, to examine the fitness of the object by which we are intendered, and to regulate in what manner we must exert our benevolent offices, so as best to render our endeavours subservient to the general good and happiness. Thus reason, like a mild and gracious prince, is to direct the will, and give laws to the passions and appetites, in such a manner as not only to promote the general interest and felicity of the mind it inhabits, but to diffuse it's friendly and benign influences to all it's fellow minds; and when this is the case, we act in conformity to the most perfect virtue. On the contrary, vice is nothing else but a misapplication and abuse of some right and laudable affections; so evident is it, without arguing from the perfections of the Deity, that he has not formed any of his creatures with a vicious bias and propensity.'

Here the clergyman seeing Lucius make a pause, rejoined—'The intention ought always to be the rule of our judgment on the conduct of others: for in this state of imperfection and difficulty, we are sometimes unable to reduce our wills, however regular, into proper action; and indeed the event does but seldom correspond with our dispositions. We ought not therefore to determine a character vicious from one or two bad actions; nor, from the comparatively few abandoned wretches, to pronounce human nature in general abandoned. But by what means are we able to judge of the intention, or to search into the secret springs of action? We cannot take in half those minute circumstances that attend them, the least of which might possibly be sufficient to alter our opinion: so far from this, we judge, not according to the temper and situation of the person censured, but from our own particular sense of things. Thus, to a generous, open mind, a little parsimony may appear as a mark of a narrow contracted spirit; but, upon examination into the person's circumstances, it will be found, perhaps, to be nothing more than a prudent concern for the welfare and support of his family; and, so far from being a blemish on his virtuous character, that it may be an effect of that virtue which it seems to contradict. But, farther to illustrate this engaging truth, which seems absolutely necessary to the peace and satisfaction of every benevolent and compassionate mind, let us consider that, in this state of imperfection, we are no more capable of arriving at a perfection in vice, than we are of virtue. The most abandoned of our species have some amiable qualities which it is impossible for them to erase: virtue has still some engaging charms; nor is it possible for any man of common sense not to feel the force of it's attractive beauties; therefore if, deceived by false appearances and delusive prospects of present pleasure,

'they

'they rebel in one instance, there are 'others in which they venerate her sa- 'cred laws.'

Be sincere now, my dear Charlotte, and confess that I have wearied you with the repetition of this grave conversation. A variety of other remarks were made upon the same subjects, which entertained us till we arrived at the house; but, in pity to you and myself, I shall make haste to conclude, and only say, that we were entertained with much politeness by my Lord; when having drank tea, we drove home, highly delighted with our agreeable excursion. But there is one particular that I ought not to forget to mention, and that is, that before I took leave of Lucius, I found an opportunity to give him my letter. He received it with an air of astonishment and confusion, imagining, I believe, that it was his own I returned; but a sudden glance of his eye in a moment discovered his mistake, when his countenance changed from a troubled paleness to a glowing red. He had not then an opportunity of speaking to me; but giving me a look sparkling with joy and surprize, he retired in such a manner as discovered his impatience to know the contents. I am now heartily weary; and, begging you would pardon the impertinence of your friend, subscribe myself, Madam, your most obliged, affectionate friend,

FELICIA.

LETTER IX.

MY DEAR ENGAGING FRIEND,

COULD I possibly imagine that, with a temper so easy, gay, and sprightly, I should be able to make such a change in your disposition, as I find my illness has occasioned! How endearing is that tender concern, that pleasing warmth of affection, with which you interest yourself in my disorder, and endeavour to support my spirits by soothing sympathies, the reviving consolations of friendship!

It is now two months since I was seized with a fever, and I have yet hardly strength to write to you; but I cannot forbear making an attempt to remove your fears, by telling you as soon as possible, that I am at last out of danger. I have lately had a near prospect of death; but while I stood upon the verge of that awful state, that undiscovered country, 'from whose bourn no traveller returns,' I felt my mind calm and serene, as if charmed with the inspiring harmony of some angelick choir: all before me was extasy! the most transporting extasy! raptures unutterable! delights boundless and eternal! But my intervals of sense were short, and disturbed with pain; I was almost continually delirious; and in these distractions of mind incessantly repeated the beloved name of my dear Lucius. I gave him the tendrest epithets; and, wrapt in a fond delusion of thought, fancied he walked with me through the most delicious scenes imagination could paint, uttering the softest, the most melting words; to which I replied in terms full of the same passionate tenderness. The whole family were witnesses of these wild rovings of fancy, which cannot fail of raising some suspicions of what I have endeavoured to conceal with the utmost care; though none but Amelia has taken notice of it to me. But how Lucius behaved I am yet altogether unacquainted, nor durst I enquire.

I find, my dear Charlotte, that I must break off: a painful languor depresses my soul; my spirits sink, and I am too much fatigued to proceed. If what I write is either unintelligible, or more than commonly incoherent, a trembling hand and giddy head are my excuse; but, however indisposed I am, nothing shall excuse me from being, dear Madam, sincerely yours,

FELICIA.

LETTER X.

MADAM,

I Am now able to write you a longer letter than my last; a circumstance that gives me the highest pleasure; so glad am I of resuming my literary conversation with you.

As soon as I was able to leave my room and receive company, I had a visit from the maiden lady, Mr. Stevens's sister, whom I shall disguise under the name of Prudilla; and indeed I had no reason to be offended at seeing her, since I might well bear with her impertinence for the sake of the person she brought with her. Lucius, impatient for an opportunity of seeing me, which he durst not even attempt alone, for fear of giving my aunt some suspicion of the interest

intereſt he had in my recovery, had offered his ſervice to wait upon her; which ſhe accepting, gave us both the means of indulging, by our mutual glances, the tender ſentiments which ſwelled our boſoms. The moment he entered the room, I could read in his looks that he had a thouſand things to ſay to me, only proper to be uttered in private. His countenance diſcovered a joy, which glowed in every feature; but when he congratulated me upon my returning health, a fear of ſaying too much made him ſay too little; but however few his words, the air and moving tone in which he uttered them ſufficiently expreſſed how much they came from his heart. 'Need I tell you, Madam,' ſaid he, turning his back to my aunt, doubtleſs to prevent her reading his looks, 'that 'I ſympathize with the reſt of your 'friends in their joy for your recovery?' While a ſtarting tear, and a glance the moſt charmingly tender, made me at once interpret his meaning, and fancy that he would have ſaid—'O my dear! 'with what tranſport do I ſee you again! 'How vaſtly does my extaſy at your 'recovery exceed the cold joy of theſe 'other friends!'

Our firſt compliments being over, and abundance of queſtions aſked concerning the nature and progreſs of my illneſs, Prudilla introduced a piece of private hiſtory, which gave her a charming opportunity of indulging for a few minutes her prevailing inclinations for detraction. 'Have you heard the news, 'ladies?' ſaid ſhe, aſſuming an air of ſtarched modeſty: 'really, it is ſo extra-'ordinary, that it makes one aſhamed 'of one's ſex. To what a prepoſterous 'height of wickedneſs is the world 'grown! Poſitively one is ſurprized to 'think of the imprudence of ſome peo-'ple. Would you think it? Miſs Lucy 'was—— I bluſh for the creature.'—'Pray, Madam,' ſaid my aunt, 'ex-'plain yourſelf; what of Miſs Lucy?' —'Really,' rejoined Prudilla, 'the af-'fair is ſo indecent, that it is a ſhock to 'modeſty but to mention it.'—'Well, 'Madam,' ſaid I, 'rather than offend 'your delicacy, we will let Miſs Lucy 'alone, and change the ſubject.'—'That is kind, my dear,' returned ſhe, ſmiling: 'ſhe was brought to bed laſt 'night. I am ſure I am all of a flame 'now,' added ſhe; 'and the crea-'ture——' 'O Madam,' cried Lucius, with a deſign to make her change the ſubject, 'that modeſt bluſh becomes 'you incomparably!' Here all the company ſmiled, for Prudilla's cheeks diſcovered not the leaſt tincture of her pretended confuſion: however, his artifice had no effect. 'Really,' reſumed ſhe, bridling back her head, and drawing up her lips, 'a bluſh does ſometimes be-'come one mightily, which is ſome re-'compence for the pain it gives one—'but, as I was ſaying, the thing has the 'impudence to excuſe herſelf by pre-'tending——' At this moment my phyſician entered the room, and gave her the mortification of being again interrupted, by his aſking me ſeveral queſtions; but at laſt taking a chair, ſhe reſumed a third time—'As I was a ſay-'ing, Madam——' 'Pray, ladies,' cried the phyſician, interrupting her again, 'may I know the ſubject of 'your converſation?'—'Yes, Sir,' replied Amelia: 'our friend here was 'mentioning a circumſtance relating to 'an unhappy lady that has been de-'luded, and was brought to bed laſt 'night.'—'Very good,' replied he. 'Not ſo good neither,' cried the prude in a peeviſh tone: 'the impudent ſlut 'would excuſe herſelf, by ſaying——' 'O, ſhe would perſuade us to believe, I 'ſuppoſe,' cried the doctor, with a ſneer, 'that the young gentleman, after 'promiſing her marriage, and ſwearing 'a thouſand oaths to convince her of 'his fidelity, finding at laſt all his ar-'guments prove unſucceſsful, in a fit 'of deſpair drew his ſword; when, 'pointing it to his boſom, he pretended 'that, ſince ſhe was ſo cruel as to diſtruſt 'his ſincerity, he would give her the laſt 'proof of the violence of his paſſion. 'Here, terrified at this dreadful ſight, 'and melting with pity, ſhe flies upon 'him, ſtops his hand, tells him that ſhe 'is convinced of his ſincerity, and will 'give him every proof of it he can rea-'ſonably deſire. He now eagerly ſeizes 'the tender moment, preſſes her cloſe, 'till ſhe at laſt conſents to purchaſe his 'life with the loſs of what ought to be 'infinitely dearer to her than her own, 'while he, in the mean time, laughs to 'find her become the dupe of his arti-'fice; ridicules her fooliſh fondneſs, 'that could make her think him in ear-'neſt; and, in ſhort, glories in the *noble* 'victory he has gained over her honour. 'This, to be ſure, was the caſe,' continued

nued he; 'at leaſt we ſhould be chari-
'table enough to think ſo, in vindica-
'tion of the poor lady.'

We all ſmiled at this piece of raillery; while Prudilla diſcovered, by her unſettled looks, that ſhe was at a loſs to know whether ſhe ought to diſapprove or commend this inſtance of the phyſician's vivacity; ſince ſhe could not gueſs whether it was intended to ridicule all the excuſes that could be made in her favour, or to apologize for her conduct. But, the moment he had done ſpeaking, Lucius rejoined, with a modeſt, unaffected air—'We ought not to wonder, 'if an artful villain can ſometimes triumph over a mind, who, knowing itſelf incapable of deceit, can hardly be 'brought to ſuſpect another, eſpecially 'the man ſhe loves, of a guilt the moſt 'black and ſhocking to nature: but 'that an honeſt man ſhould be ſo hurried away by the favour of impetuous 'deſire, is indeed a caſe very extraordinary, and not eaſily accounted for. 'Can a virtuous man be ſo void of reaſon, ſo loſt to prudence and the tender 'delicacies of an innocent paſſion, as to 'hazard for a moment the honour and 'reputation of her he loves? Will he 'not even diſtruſt himſelf? Nay, ſuppoſing him ever ſo certain of the integrity of his own heart, are there not a 'variety of circumſtances which may 'render it impoſſible for him to fulfil 'his engagements? And muſt not the 'bare poſſibility of this damp even the 'very firſt idea of a too precipitate pleaſure which may be ſo dearly bought? 'The leaſt apprehenſion of ruining the 'object of his tendereſt affections, muſt 'ſurely give him the moſt dreadful 'alarms, and fill his mind with the moſt 'dreadful fears, the moſt terrible conflicts.'—'And is it not equally ſurprizing,' returned my aunt, 'that a 'modeſt lady can hear a propoſal of this 'kind without being ſhocked! without 'looking into the gulf of miſery and 'ruin which lies before her! without 'trembling at the dangers which ſurround her! without imploring the Divine aſſiſtance, and reſolving to loſe 'her life, rather than taint her virtue, 'or ſurrender her honour upon the fairеſt promiſes! But, alas! we frequently 'ſee people act without thought, and, 'unintimidated by the miſery of thoſe 'who have fallen into the ſame ſnare, 'precipitately ruſh upon their own de-
'ſtruction! A promiſe of marriage is 'the uſual bait; but this unhappy la-
'dy's ſtory ought to convince every 'one that, even in the neareſt proſpect 'of that union, it is the higheſt degree 'of folly and madneſs to drop the guard 'of innocence, and allow her intended 'huſband liberties inconſiſtent with de-
'cency, and the reſerve of a modeſt 'prudence.'

'It is a great misfortune,' rejoined Lucius with an air of candour, 'that in 'this caſe a falſe ſtep (which may poſſibly proceed from nothing more than 'imprudence, or a too eaſy confidence) 'ſhould be attended with ſuch dreadful 'conſequences with reſpect to the ladies, and one action throw an indelible 'ſtain on the faireſt character; while another perſon, of an infinitely worſe 'diſpoſition, may indulge the rancour 'of her heart in ſporting with the honour and reputation of thouſands. 'Miſs Lucy is a lady poſſeſſed of ſo 'many virtues, that if the caſe required 'it, every one, I think, would be glad 'of ſeeing reaſon to believe her leſs criminal than ſhe may appear at firſt 'view; but, if I am not miſinformed, 'there is no need of wiſhing for reaſons 'to excuſe her conduct. A variety of 'extraordinary circumſtances are in her 'favour: her modeſty and virtue have 'ſtood the ſevereſt ſhock; and, if it be 'thought that ſhe has here loſt all pretenſions to them, it ought to be conſidered too, that the day ſhe forfeited 'them appeared to her, and to all her 'friends, the laſt of her freedom. The 'next day was to have given him that 'right to her perſon, which love, a reciprocal love, had conſtituted long before. She was his by obligations the 'moſt ſacred and binding; obligations 'that can only be confirmed and rendered legal by the aſſiſtance of the magiſtrate or prieſt. They thought themſelves ſecure in each other's fidelity; 'they fancied nothing could prevent the 'happy ceremony from being ſolemnized: but, alas! life itſelf is precarious; that very night he was ſeized 'with a malignant fever, which, though 'it carried him off in a few days, in all 'his intervals of ſenſe he acknowledged 'his engagements; and, even in his laſt 'moments, he called her his wife; and 'confirmed the right he had given her 'in his will to poſſeſs his eſtate, by frequently expreſſing his deſire of having

'it faithfully executed.'—'How!' cried Prudilla, in a lofty tone of authority, 'do you pretend to vindicate the creature? If she has loſt her reputation, it 'is no more than ſhe deſerves. I would 'have no mercy on ſuch impudent, confident things. Can any puniſhment 'be great enough for the ſluts who are 'ſuch a diſgrace to the modeſty of our 'ſex? They ſhould be all burnt alive, 'or hanged at leaſt.'—'Hold, Madam,' replied my aunt, haſtily interrupting her; 'indeed, you are too ſevere. It muſt be 'confeſſed, indeed, that both ſhe and 'her lover were much to blame: they 'were certainly guilty of the higheſt 'degree of imprudence and folly; but 'you ought to conſider, too, that virtue 'does not conſiſt in the loſs of humanity 'and good manners. I was preſent 'when the young gentleman expired; 'and was witneſs of a ſcene that I ſhall 'never forget as long as I live; the very 'remembrance brings tears to my eyes. 'A few minutes before he breathed his 'laſt, his ſenſes, which had been long 'diſturbed, returned; when calling for 'his dear wife, Lucy, who ſat near the 'bed drowned in grief, and fatigued 'with conſtant watching, ſtarted from 'her ſilent ſadneſs, while her impatience 'to know what he had to ſay, ſuſpended 'for a moment the falling tear. He 'preſſed her in his weak and trembling 'arms, and endeavoured in the moſt 'endearing manner to enable her to ſup'port his loſs; ſaid the kindeſt, the moſt 'affecting things; till at laſt his counte'nance brightening into a placid ſere'nity, he lifted up his eyes to Heaven, 'and ſtill preſſing her hand, ſeemed to 'make her the ſubject of ſome ardent 'petition; but he had no ſooner finiſhed 'his ſilent ejaculations, than fixing a 'moſt tender look upon her, he cried—"Adieu! my Lucy, my wife!" when 'ſhutting his eyes, he ſunk upon the 'pillow and expired. But what words 'can expreſs the unhappy Lucy's deſpair! 'She fainted away upon his lifeleſs body; 'her cheek lay upon his, and equalled 'the mortal paleneſs of that it preſſed. I 'aſſiſted in carrying her out of the room, 'and recovering her ſenſes; but they no 'ſooner returned, than (ſad effect of the 'moſt violent grief!) her tears, her in'ceſſant tears, were ſtopped; and ſhe gave 'way to a ſilent ſober melancholy, infi'nitely more terrible than the ſtrongeſt 'impulſes of raging deſpair.'—'Alas!' cried Lucius, in a tone that plainly expreſſed the compaſſionate diſpoſition of his heart, 'how much is this poor lady to be 'pitied! but would not her diſtreſs, her 'ſhame, her infamy, have been greater, if 'her grief had ſprung from his infidelity 'rather than his death? She now juſtly 'laments a man every way worthy of her 'eſteem and affection; his memory is 'ſtill dear to her; his virtues are a pleaſ'ing ſubject of melancholy delight and 'ſoothing pain. But with what ago'nies of rage, vexation, and madneſs, 'would ſhe have ſuſtained the ſhock of 'finding the man falſe on whoſe fidelity 'ſhe had repoſed her honour! with what 'mortifying inquietudes would ſhe find 'herſelf contemned by him ſhe loved! 'yet the guilt would in fact be his; the 'folly and imprudence hers. Conſci'ous of the purity of an innocent heart, 'her ſevereſt reproaches muſt fall upon 'the guilty villain, the barbarous be'trayer of her peace and happineſs, and 'not immediately on herſelf. Yet how 'vaſtly different muſt be the reflections 'of a lady in theſe circumſtances, from 'thoſe of the ſelf-deteſted proſtitute, the 'abandoned wretch, who from avarice, 'ambition, or guilty deſire, covers her'ſelf with eternal infamy and reproach; 'with irreparable loſs of honour; with 'the averſion of all the wiſe and good; 'with the ſilent, but infinitely more 'dreadful upbraidings of a guilty con'ſcience; the horrors of remorſe, and 'that agonizing dread which accom'panies a conſciouſneſs of the Divine 'diſpleaſure, doubly terrible in all her 'views of futurity! What ſuperlative 'wretchedneſs! Can imagination paint 'any diſtreſs equal to that which thus 'ariſes from the racking perturbation of 'a mind aſhamed of itſelf? or can all the 'boaſted advantages of wealth, pride, 'and ſucceſsful ambition, (the trifles for 'which the tranquil ſweets of innocence 'are forfeited) ſupport the ſpirits ſink'ing under ſuch a flood of complicated 'miſery?'

Here Lucius concluded; and ſome ladies coming in at the ſame time, the converſation took a different turn. I leave you now, my dear Charlotte, to make what reflections you pleaſe upon what I have here related; but I could not ſee Lucius retire with the reſt, without feeling an uneaſineſs that let me know the exceſs of my paſſion. However, he had the addreſs, in parting, to

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slip the following letter into my hand unperceived; he delivered it with an air of tenderness, saying with a low voice—'Since I am not permitted, Madam, either to send or speak to you alone, forgive the absurdity of my being my own messenger.' I made no other answer than wishing him a good night; and as soon as he was gone, seized the first opportunity of retiring to my chamber, when securing the door, to prevent my being surprized, I broke open the seal, and read the following lines—

'DEAR MADAM,

'IF you knew with what an excess of grief I have lamented your illness, while I considered you on the borders of the grave, you might perhaps form some idea of that sweet, that transporting joy, with which I find you returning to life, and all the satisfactions of health and ease. I cannot help regarding your physician as my dearest friend; I could hug him to my bosom for contributing to your recovery, at the same time that I bless the unseen hand of Providence, and pour out my grateful heart to that most gracious Being who has heard my prayers, who has beheld with compassion my incessant tears. Amelia's friendship for my sister, and the concern they have both in all that relates to you, have procured me an opportunity of learning every day the state of your disorder, without my running the hazard of discovering my passion to your aunt, by a solicitude that would doubtless render me suspected. Yet what a multitude of hopes and fears has this correspondence given! in a swift succession they have raised my soul to sudden rapture, and then sunk me down into the most dreadful despair! Sad vicissitude! All my happiness seemed to depend upon your life; and while that was at stake, a prospect of inevitable misery lay before me. All joy seemed departing. A solitary sadness, a dreary gloom, hung upon my spirits, and hovered round the various beauties of nature; they had no charms for me. Not wealth nor titles, with all their splendour, could have calmed the anguish occasioned by your loss. While I thought that the most lovely form and the fairest mind were near being separated, my heart-strings were ready to burst, as if the very seat of life and vital heat was going to be torn from my bosom. Religion only had power to moderate my grief, and by it's reviving consolations disperse the darkening clouds which hung about my soul. But how shall I be able to describe the sudden extasy, the transporting rapture, which filled my breast, when I heard that you were out of danger! I sickened with a sweet excess of delight. But, alas! to what purpose are these involuntary transports? Why do I place all my happiness in seeing and hearing you, since no sacred ties will ever bind us together, and secure the continuance of these innocent enjoyments? Accept, however, of my warmest congratulations; and while my happiness depends entirely upon yours, believe me to be the sincerest and most affectionate of your servants,

'LUCIUS.'

I confess, my dear friend, that I could not read this letter without tears, and indulging some reflections on the unhappiness of my situation; but as it is time to conclude my long epistle, I shall pass over these unquiet thoughts, and subscribe myself your most hearty friend,

FELICIA.

LETTER XI.

FROM Amaranthine bowers, and embrowning shades; from flowery lawns, and all the silent solemn scenes of peaceful innocence and harmless love; thy friend Felicia greets her other self, her dear, her much loved Charlotte.

Don't you think now, my dear, by this beginning, that I am tolerably well read in romance, and have drank deep of the spirit of those extraordinary performances? At least I think I ought to have some knowledge of them, since I seem to be writing one myself. My plot now begins to thicken; and I shall certainly, if ever these letters come to light, be considered, in some future time, as a little heroine; while Lucius will have an undisputed claim to the honour of being the hero of my story. He has now a very formidable obstacle to encounter with, before he can even hope to arrive at the height of his happiness: but you need not be frighted, here are no fiery dragons to conquer, or inchant-

ed caſtles to ſtorm; my paſtoral adventure will furniſh no ſuch prodigies. I will therefore leave theſe marvellous events to the doughty wonder-working champions of ancient date, and content myſelf with ſticking cloſe to truth and nature; and don't doubt but that, in the ruſtick ſimplicity in which I ſpend my time, I ſhall furniſh a hiſtory at leaſt as entertaining as theirs. And, indeed, whatever name is given to my ſtory, whether of rural adventures, novel, or romance, I ſhould be very well ſatisfied, though all the world thought it fictitious, might I at laſt (which I hardly dare hope for) have it concluded, like the moſt celebrated pieces of imaginary ſcenes of love and gallantry, in a happy cataſtrophe.

As I am very fond of my couſin Polly, who is one of the prettieſt little creatures you ever ſaw, I frequently amuſe myſelf, and divert her, with gathering flowers, making garlands, and ſometimes placing them in her hair, or adorning her head with a wreath, as agreeable for it's odours as for the intermingled luſtre of it's glowing colours. You cannot imagine, Madam, how charmingly the dear child looks when thus adorned; you would be apt to take her for ſome little ſylvan deity, or one of the inhabitants of the ſkies. The weather being extremely fine, we went yeſterday morning into the garden to divert ourſelves in this innocent manner; when having ſpent ſome time in our childiſh paſtime, a deſire to indulge at large my own reflections, made me leave my young companion, and retire into a neighbouring field; there I ſeated myſelf on a riſing bank, beneath which ran a ſtream that, flowing ſwiftly with a gentle murmur, drew my attention, and fixed my eyes upon the various-coloured pebbles which ſhone through the liquid cryſtal. But though theſe trifles engaged my looks, my heart was fixed upon an object infinitely more important; I was thinking of my dear Lucius, and enumerating in idea not only his ſeveral perfections, but recollecting all the fine things I had heard him ſay: and could I be entertained in a manner more delightful? But I had not long indulged theſe pleaſing contemplations, when I was interrupted by my little prattler, who ſeeing me at a diſtance, came running with her hands full of flowers. I was then ſo buried in thought, that I did not ſee her till ſhe was almoſt come up to me, when calling me to look at her treaſure, and to obſerve ſome carnations ſhe herſelf had been placing in her hair, I was ſo vexed at being diſturbed in my pleaſing dreams, that I could not help anſwering her a little peeviſhly, and deſiring her to leave me. She was juſtly ſurprized to ſee my humour ſo ſoon changed; and, with a voice that ſpoke her out of breath with running, ſaid, ſhe wondered how ſhe had made me angry; but that ſhe would not leave me till I had forgiven her. The tears now trickling down her roſy cheeks, made me in a moment aſhamed of my ſudden ill-nature. I took her in my arms, and fondly kiſſing her, told her I only deſired to be a few minutes alone, and begged ſhe would tell me what ſhe wanted. 'You told me,' ſaid ſhe, reſuming her uſual ſweetneſs, 'that theſe 'flowers made me look very pretty; 'won't they, Madam, make you look 'pretty too? I wanted to make you as 'fine as you made me. Won't you 'let me dreſs your head?' I could not help ſmiling at this queſtion; but upon her perſiſting in her requeſt, I at laſt conſented; and fancying nobody could poſſibly ſee me, reſolved to do as ſhe deſired; and afterwards lead her through the garden, to divert my aunt and Amelia with her childiſh frolick. I therefore took a ribband out of my pocket, and enamelling it with the brighteſt colours I could ſelect from thoſe ſhe brought me, bound it round my head; when an impulſe of curioſity made me haſtily go nearer the brook, to place it to advantage, and ſee how well it became me. Here I ſtaid ſome time with my eyes fixed on the watery mirror, holding the beauteous child by her hand, and obſerving the different effects theſe fantaſtick ornaments had in the countenances of our ſhadowy images. I was now in a moſt gay and lively humour, and lifting up my eyes with a chearful ſmile, was going to propoſe our return home, when I was ſtruck with the ſight of a well-dreſſed gentleman, who ſtood gazing upon us from the oppoſite bank, and who had doubtleſs been a witneſs of all my fooleries. Innocent as my amuſement had been, I could not at firſt recover from the confuſion and diſorder this ſpectator gave me. However, I

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turned haſtily, and taking hold of Miſs Polly's hand, began to move towards the garden; at the ſame time pulling off my various-coloured tiara, threw it on the ground; when the ſtranger having ſtood ſtill for a moment, ſuddenly leaped from the oppoſite bank, haſted after me, and ſeizing the hand that was at liberty, after a deluge of compliments, which diſcovered at leaſt his good-breeding, conducted me home. My aunt immediately, by her behaviour, let me ſee that ſhe was far from being diſpleaſed with my companion; ſhe treated him with the utmoſt reſpect, yet endeavoured frequently to dive into his thoughts, by examining his countenance with a ſcrupulous and ſteady inſpection. She ſeemed to penetrate his very ſoul; not the leaſt geſture could eſcape her notice; yet ſhe was ſo cautious in theſe piercing regards, that it was impoſſible for him to obſerve them; and indeed her looks all the while expreſſed a ſatisfaction that let me ſee that, whatever diſcoveries ſhe had made, they were far from being diſagreeable to her; for whenever my eyes met hers, I could eaſily diſcern an affectionate kind of joy, which ſeemed to ariſe from the tender glow of a warm heart.

The gentleman behaved all this while with the moſt perfect eaſe and freedom; and, without appearing under the leaſt conſtraint by the old lady's preſence, entertained me with the confident freedom of an old lover, who thinks he has a right to our tenderneſs and reſpect. Nay, he told my aunt, even in my preſence, the ſituation in which he found me; the manner in which he ſaid I attracted his eyes and heart; informed her of the minuteſt circumſtance relating to my behaviour; deſcribed the flowers which adorned my head; drew a compariſon between them; and, to uſe his own words, the more lovely and attractive beauties of my cheeks. Nor was my ſhape, my air, forgotten; he took me for ſome goddeſs; I could certainly be no leſs than one of the immortals. Here he diſcovered all the heathen mythology he had learnt at ſchool; proteſted that he miſtook me for Flora; and left I ſhould be too ſimple to underſtand the honour that was done me by this compariſon, told me that ſhe was one of the moſt charming of all the goddeſſes, and could be equalled in beauty by none upon earth but me. In ſhort, he even offered to go himſelf and fetch the flowery wreath that ſo much became me; aſſured us, that the firſt moment he ſaw me was the laſt of his liberty; and aſſerted, that if I would conſent to be his, he ſhould ever after our marriage oblige me to perpetuate the remembrance of that happy day, by wearing upon it a like blooming crown.

Thus he ran on for a quarter of an hour together, without giving either my aunt or me an opportunity of ſpeaking a ſingle ſyllable; he was all life and gaiety, and attempted to divert me at the ſame time that he ſtrove to find a way to my heart. He thought it impoſſible that I ſhould be inſenſible to the force of flattery, and therefore attacked my vanity with inceſſant praiſes. One moment he ſeemed melting in tenderneſs; but then immediately recovering himſelf, as dreading my taking an advantage of his weakneſs to uſe him ill, laughed at his own paſſion, and ſeeming to triumph over it, turned it into ridicule, with a vivacity accompanied with abundance of wit and humour. In ſhort, he is the moſt ſprightly unaffected creature you ever beheld; for even affectation in him muſt loſe it's name; every thing is natural, genteel, and eaſy.

But I had not been long in his company, when my aunt, fancying that ſhe might poſſibly be a reſtraint to us both, took an opportunity to leave the room. However, his behaviour was ſtill the ſame; he ſmiled and looked grave; he ſighed and laughed; he ſung a languiſhing ſtrain, the next moment hummed a rigadoon, and capered about the room; but yet it was not difficult to diſcover, that though his temper naturally inclined him to be gay, it would have been now much more eaſy to him, and doubtleſs more pleaſing too, to have aſſumed a behaviour more agreeable to the ſituation of his heart. In ſpite of all his efforts, love ſtill had the maſtery; and methought his ſighs appeared much more genuine than thoſe ſtarts of airy ſprightlineſs under which he endeavoured to conceal them. He would have me conſider him as a lover, though he was unwilling to appear with the languiſhing tenderneſs of one that felt the full power of that paſſion. Yet, in his very attempts to ſhew his liberty, he rattled his chains. I am ſure you would have laughed as heartily at his behaviour as I did; for indeed he is one of the moſt

most odd, fantastick, agreeable fellows, that ever assumed the tender name of a lover. But as I have given you Lucius's picture, you may expect that I should give you his too: take it then as follows.

He is pretty tall, and of the just mean between too fat or too lean; his shape is genteel and easy; his air, that of a fine gentleman who has seen the world; his complexion fair, his forehead large, his eyes brisk and full of fire; his nose of a moderate size; his mouth rather too wide, but rendered agreeable by a constant smile which sits on his lips, and dimples in his cheeks; and as to his chin, I assure you, it is not less regular than any other feature in his face. But I must not forget to mention his dress, which in this rustick part of the country appears very singular: every thing about him is of the newest fashion; nor does he want any ornament to set off his person to advantage. This is an exact portrait of the gay, the janty, the confident Mellifont; and by the description I have already given you of him, you will readily imagine that poor Lucius has a very formidable rival.

After having diverted me for near two hours, with a thousand agreeable extravagancies, he bid me adieu; but, before he left the house, had a private conversation of some minutes with my aunt, who, as soon as he was gone, came to me; when seating herself in a chair close to mine, she told me with a smile, that the gentleman had been begging her leave to continue his visits; that she knew him to be of a good family, and possessed of an estate of three thousand a year; and added, that if he was agreeable to me, and was really as much in love as he pretended, she thought I could not make a better choice. I replied with a good deal of truth, that however diverting his company had been, he had not yet made any impression upon my heart; and that, agreeable as his levity might render him to other women, I could not help thinking that a lasting happiness must be built upon a more solid foundation than the airy flights of such a giddy volatile temper. 'I must confess, 'Madam,' said I, 'that his person and 'behaviour would render his addresses 'acceptable to the far greater part of our 'sex, who are perhaps too easily pleased 'with a gay appearance. His confi- 'dence might, in their opinion, appear 'heroick, and carry along with it irre- 'sistible charms; but I shall never think 'a man has any degree of tenderness 'for me, while I have not the power to 'soften him too much for him to discover all his sprightliness in my presence.' My aunt smiled at this reply; and only answered, that she would not advise me to any thing contrary to my inclinations; and Amelia and Polly coming in at the same time, we dropt the subject.

I have nothing further to add, than that I am, my dear Charlotte, your most obedient servant,

FELICIA.

LETTER XII.

I SHALL not pretend, my dear Charlotte, to decide whether the extraordinary assurance of Mellifont, or the diffidence of Lucius, is the most excusable quality; they are both certainly very great foibles when carried to excess. But as confidence and folly are nearly allied, so modesty is a weakness, if it suppresses a man's virtue, and hides it from the world; if it fetters his mind, and restrains his actions when he desires to exert himself. But if Lucius appears, even upon a superficial view, superior to Mellifont, notwithstanding the thick shade which, instead of shewing his merit to advantage, obscures some of his brightest excellencies, how much more amiable must he appear than that gentleman, if it be considered that his good qualities are set in the most glaring and striking light, and that his very follies are some of his greatest perfections!

I told you in my last, that Amelia's entering the room put an end to the conversation I had with my aunt upon the merit and fortune of Mellifont; but I forgot to add, that upon our telling my cousin of the visit I had received from my gay spark, I perceived that she changed colour; and immediately her countenance, which at first had all the marks of ease and good humour, discovered the evident symptoms of a thoughtful disturbance; nor should I perhaps have called this circumstance to mind, which I then took but little notice of, had not her behaviour since that time awakened my attention, and quickened my apprehension.

Though her temper is naturally rather grave than sprightly, yet I had always remarked in her a most agreeable even-

ness

neſs of diſpoſition, a flow of ſerene and tranquil ſpirits, which gave an engaging chearfulneſs to her behaviour, and rendered her equally acceptable to others, and happy in herſelf: this was an obſervation that her whole deportment had confirmed ever ſince I knew her; but now that placid ſerenity, which ſweetened our converſation, and greatly enhanced the pleaſures of our mutual friendſhip, ſeemed interrupted; ſhe ſought for opportunities of being alone, and diſcovered a reſerve which I really thought her incapable of. I have had a viſit in form from Mellifont almoſt every day ſince the date of my laſt. He comes in his coach, with a pompous equipage, and dreſſed with as much ſplendor as if he had prepared to appear in the drawing-room on a birth-night; while every viſit ſeems to increaſe poor Amelia's diſcontent and coldneſs to me.

Two days ago, as I was taking a turn in the garden, I found her ſeated in a penſive poſture, in a painted alcove at the end of an alley the moſt obſcure and retired. She ſeemed loſt in thought; and leaning her head upon her hands, with both her elbows fixed upon the table, was doubtleſs indulging ſome ſerious reflections: but, whatever was the ſubject of her contemplations, the ruſtling I made amongſt the leaves of ſome boughs, which for want of cutting croſſed the path, and which rebounded back as I forced my way through them, ſoon made her lift up her eyes; when coming towards me—'My dear,' cried I, 'you will think me, perhaps, guilty 'of ill manners, for being ſo rude as to 'intrude upon your ſolitude: but no 'matter; my affection for you gives 'me ſome right to your confidence; and 'therefore, in the name of friendſhip, 'I deſire you will either make me as 'grave as yourſelf, or permit me the 'pleaſure of forcing you to partake of 'my gaiety. Come, let me know the 'cauſe of this change—ſome doleful 'ditty! ſome tender tale of love! Come, 'come, out with it.' Here taking hold of her hand, I began to lead her back to the alcove; when turning her head away, with an air of unaffected coldneſs, ſhe gave a deep ſigh, and then begged that I would be ſo kind as to let her go, ſince ſhe was in an ill humour, and was very unwilling to infect me. 'Nay; 'Amelia,' ſaid I, 'I have no right to 'detain you againſt your inclinations; I 'thought I might be ſo happy as to di-'vert you: I hope you will not think an 'unſeaſonable attempt of this kind un-'pardonable.'—'No, my dear,' ſaid ſhe, 'you are extremely obliging; but, 'as I ſhall be but a diſagreeable com-'panion, I chuſe to retire.' At this ſhe left me; when ſtanding ſtill for a moment, to think whither I ſhould ramble, I ſaw her returning. She begged pardon for her ill manners; and, making ſome apologies, aſked at laſt how I liked Mellifont, and what I thought of his addreſſes? I laughed at her queſtion; and readily replied, that I thought him a much more agreeable companion than a lover, 'Nay, my dear Felicia,' ſaid ſhe, with jealouſy in her eyes, 'don't 'diſſemble; are not you charmed with his 'company?'—'Not as a lover, I aſſure 'you,' ſaid I: 'he is indeed one of the 'moſt agreeable impertinents I ever 'beheld. But why this queſtion? 'Have you any private intereſt in view, 'that you aſk it? Come, be frank now; 'and if it will be any ſatisfaction to you, 'I here reſign all pretenſions to his 'heart. I ſhould be very glad of being 'excuſed from the trouble of receiving 'his viſits, though I can't deny but 'there is a pleaſure attends the homage 'of a man of his humour and appear-'ance; they ſoothe our vanity, give us 'an air of importance, and flatter our 'prevailing deſire of making captives.' —'But this is a very ill-natured plea-'ſure,' replied Amelia, with ſome warmth; 'and I thought you had too 'much good ſenſe, as well as huma-'nity, to indulge it at the expence of 'the eaſe and happineſs of a worthy 'gentleman. Beſides, it is dangerous 'ſporting with the tenderneſs of a man 'of ſuch merit; for while you hover 'round the flame, you may poſſibly 'burn your wings.'—'No, never fear 'it,' returned I; 'I am in no danger, I 'aſſure you: but if he will pay his ad-'dreſſes to me, how can I prevent it? 'Am I anſwerable for his folly? I 'have uſed no arts to retain him; and, 'indeed, have been ſo far from in-'dulging my pride at the expence of his 'peace, that I have endeavoured as 'much as poſſible to make him loſe all 'hope of obtaining my affection.' Amelia's countenance now cleared up; a riſing joy ſparkled in her eyes, and gave an agreeable fluſh to her cheeks; and, in ſhort, ſhe had all that air of eaſe and ſatisfaction

tisfaction which our looks commonly expreſs when we feel our hearts eaſed of a burthen which diſtorts it's tender fibres, and gives us the moſt racking pain: but preſently aſſuming an air of ſoftneſs, ſhe confeſſed, with a low voice, (as if dreading, even in that retired place, a witneſs of her melting paſſion) that ſhe loved the dear engaging Mellifont; but ſhe had no ſooner eaſed her boſom of this important ſecret, than a ruſtick bluſh, with all the marks of a confuſion which ſprings from innocence and artleſs ſimplicity, overſpread her face, and made her hang down her head: but at laſt recovering herſelf, ſhe told me ſhe had ſeen Mellifont a few days before he paid me my firſt viſit; that ſhe was charmed with his perſon, but did not perceive that he had made any extraordinary impreſſion on her heart, till ſhe found that he paid his addreſſes to me; when love, jealouſy, and deſpair, contributed all their force to render her unhappy. She then aſked me, with a ſmile that demanded my confidence, if I was leſs ſenſible of the merit of Lucius than ſhe of Mellifont? and told me, that ſuſpecting it while I was ſick, from the tender things I ſaid of him, ſhe ſent to let Marilla know, that if her brother had a real affection for me, it would be then imprudent to continue his viſits; and that having learnt from her friend the violence of his paſſion, ſhe had uſed all her art to prevent giving him the uneaſineſs he might feel at finding me in the company of his rival. Senſible of the advantages I received from her prudent precaution, and reflecting that my aunt would probably, without her aſſiſtance to keep it ſecret, have been by this time fully convinced of my tenderneſs for Lucius, I returned her my ſincereſt thanks. We then talked of his perfections—delightful ſubject!—in which ſhe ſeemed to ſtrive to outdo me, in giving him the praiſes due to his merit; while the reſerve which for ſeveral days had ſubſiſted between us, now ending in a mutual open confidence, bound us cloſer to each other, by ſhewing her the folly of her groundleſs diſtruſt, and ſtrengthening and enlarging my eſteem for her, who, in the midſt of her jealous fears, took care of my happineſs, and provided againſt the diſcovery of a ſecret, on the concealment of which all my future felicity depended. We embraced with the utmoſt affection, and made reciprocal promiſes of treating each other for the future without diſguiſe, the very appearance of which was now below the dignity of our friendſhip. Our hearts were to lie open, and not the leaſt circumſtance relating to the happineſs of each other concealed. What a pleaſing intercourſe of tender paſſion! All jealouſy being now removed, ſhe ſtrove to increaſe the ardour of my love for Lucius, by relating a thouſand circumſtances in his favour; while her praiſes gave me a delight infinitely ſuperior to any flattery beſtowed upon myſelf. Wrapt up in the ſoft ſatisfaction ſhe gave me, I gratefully returned the obligation, by mentioning all the agreeable things that could juſtly be ſaid of Mellifont, to which ſhe liſtened with equal eagerneſs, and the ſame exceſs of ſoothing pleaſure.

We now walk an hour every day to talk on the ſame ſubject, and I do not believe we either of us find our delight grow leſs by the repetition. Love is an inexhauſtible theme; it furniſhes our converſation with the moſt delicate, refined, and exquiſite ideas; it raiſes us above ourſelves; and not only inſpires an elevation of ſentiment, but gives us a very noble and ſublime manner of expreſſing what it dictates: ſo that were you to hear us on this melting ſubject, you would ſmile at our diction, and the tender cadence of our periods; and be much more ready to take us for a couple of theatrical heroines, rehearſing the parts of two languiſhing princeſſes, than for rural nymphs, unaccuſtomed to high flights and lofty ſtrains, whoſe only perfection conſiſts in being paſtoral lovers. Sometimes we walk for two minutes together in eloquent ſilence; then, after a ſigh or two ſtill more eloquent, we burſt into ſome moving complaint on the ſeverity of Fortune, in making her love a perſon in wealth her ſuperior, and me a youth unbleſt with the advantages I enjoy.

Thus I employ the time of Lucius's abſence, in a way moſt agreeable to that eſteem and affection I ſhall always have for him; while abſence, inſtead of removing the tender ſoftneſs of my heart, renders every thought of him ſtill dearer to me, and preſents him to my mind in every new charm which fancy or love can invent.

But I would not have you imagine, Madam, that we ſpend all our time in theſe uſeleſs lamentations; we have read

novels, romances, and plays, and have therefore some notion of plots and stratagems: but I believe we were neither of us formed for intrigue, since, with all our industry, we cannot yet invent any method to procure me the company of my lover, that will not render us liable to suspicion from my aunt. Besides, Mellifont is a constant interruption to my happiness by his perpetual visits; for I cannot resolve to see Lucius at a time when we should be so liable to be disturbed by that intruder's presence. His company, on this account, grows distasteful to me, and it is with the utmost difficulty that I keep within the bounds of good-manners. But I am afraid of disobliging him, lest he should acquaint my father with his passion, which he would doubtless approve; and lest my refusing to gratify him in this particular, should offend him so much, as to make him cross me in the dearest interests of my heart. I am, Madam, yours, &c.

FELICIA.

LETTER XIII.

MADAM,

NOT the cooling shade of some friendly bower, the fanning breeze of Zephyrs, or the agreeable freshness of some limpid stream, could give greater delight to the laborious hind, scorched with the meridian sun's too ardent beams, than I received from the news of your being already joined, by the most sacred bonds, to the gay, the tender Philario. May all your days be propitious! May blooming joys, ever opening with new delight, perpetuate your felicity! May his lordship's affection, instead of decreasing with time, ripen into that soft esteem, that tender complacency, which are the natural attendants of love and merit, and the highest summit of all sublunary happiness! In short, may you be bound to him with all that dignity of passion which is necessary to render him ever as dear to you as now; while love shall have the energy of religion, and inclination the force of every sacred dictate!

You see, Madam, what an aukward creature I would have you. To dare to be happy is a thing so unfashionable, that it may possibly require some degree of resolution to withstand the shock of being thought that dull thing called a *fond wife*: but however unpolite it is to have any degree of affection subsist between those who ought to have the greatest, you have too much good sense to be ashamed of what must now not only be the essence of your happiness, but your highest glory. How strange is it, that a name, a mere sound, and a sound, too, to which we have no settled meaning, should have such an influence upon mankind, as to make them cancel all the engagements of duty, affection, and happiness, and even forfeit all their hopes of a blissful futurity! What bewitching charm, what dire spell, what strange enchantment, is contained in the word *polite*, that it should controul our very passions, and make us suffer greater pangs of self-denial to become vicious, than would be sufficient to raise us to the highest attainments of heroick virtue! To be thought *polite*, how many ladies are contented to be fashionably miserable? To be thought *polite*, an old fop, decrepid with years, will keep a mistress, and have the insolence to boast of a thousand vices, which his years, one would think, exempted him from. To be thought *polite*, a man will contemn the too condescending affection of the stupid fool his wife, despise her easy virtue, and at the same time adore an impudent prostitute, who tyrannizes over him, and insults him with impunity; while a lady, for the same reason, (out of *politeness*) will abhor the nauseous fond wretch her husband. Thus a confused notion of *honour* (another word of the same kind, the letters of which I suppose are a kind of talisman) will make a coward go trembling to destruction, and rush with horror into a dreaded eternity!

You will think this a very odd kind of a preamble to be addressed to a bride in all the blooming pride of youth and beauty; but, if you consider that we ought to lay down some principles to secure the continuance of true felicity, you will not think it an inexcusable piece of impertinence in me to put you in mind that, if we would enjoy any solid happiness, we must be contented to dissent from the maxims of the greatest part of mankind. It is certain, that we are governed more by sound than we are generally willing to imagine. But I might have considered, too, that your good sense had undoubtedly directed you to make the same observation. But, let that be as it will,

I know I am secure of your pardon; for you are now in too happy a situation to be offended at any thing I can say, however common and trifling my thoughts.

To put an end to these grave remarks, I come to mine own affairs: and first, I shall tell you, that I have lately had an interview with Lucius, in which I gave him an opportunity of indulging all the tenderness of his heart; a satisfaction that was procured me by the kind assistance of Amelia. Upon hearing, a few days since, of the necessities of an honest but indigent family, about a mile distant from my aunt's, I resolved to pay them a visit, to indulge some of that sublime pleasure which it is the greatest advantage of a large fortune to procure us. Amelia only was acquainted with this visit; nor did I tell her of it till I was ready to set out, when I desired her to accompany me, to which she instantly consented. We found the unhappy mansion situated at the foot of a hill, surrounded with several inclosures of orchards, pasture grounds, and corn fields: at the entrance leading to the door, was a short walk between two elder hedges, which inclosed a small kitchen garden, with some stacks of hay, and, near the main building, some stables and barns. But every thing was in profound silence; for no human object was near, and nothing to be heard but the warbling songs of the airy choristers, who fluttered amongst the hedges, or sat making their responses from the distant thorny brakes. The solitary stillness of the place, added to the reflection of the business in which I was employed, contributed to render me thoughtful, and I could not help giving some moments to the consideration of the various unavoidable miseries which attend human nature; miseries which neither virtue nor prudence can always guard against. With a mind thus dipped in pity, I could not help hesitating a little when we came to the door; but at last rapping softly, we entered the room, where despair and sorrow were painted in the strongest colours, and in every face such an undissembled sadness, as struck me to the very soul: for, notwithstanding the relief I intended to give them, I could not forbear sharing in the general grief; and, indeed, it was with some pain that I assumed an air of ease and chearfulness, in order to comfort a pretty boy, who stood with his eyes fixed upon his mother, and, pulling her by the apron, cried at seeing her weep. Two other children, too young to take the same notice, were playing about the room. But, wherever I turned my eyes, every thing was in disorder; nor was it easy to cross the room, or take a chair, for the confused heap of litter which was every where strewed about. Alas! the poor woman was in too deep affliction to attend to the management of her family; her mind too much discomposed to attend to order and decorum: for a violent distress almost always renders us inactive; it sinks and depresses the spirits; and, when no visible assistance is in view, even makes the unhappy incapable of thinking, or using their natural abilities, in order to extricate themselves from the pressure of their difficulties.

These observations, Madam, I have learned from my aunt, and have always found them agreeable to truth. At one of the windows sat a young man, with despair in his eyes, and a look that discovered he was grown stupid with grief. A book of devotion lay open before him, on which his regards were fixed; but fixed in such a steady manner, as shewed that he was incapable of reading: he pored on the same place, and neither his eyes nor his head moved to take in the compass of a line. As soon as we entered the room, the good woman arose from her chair, and, appearing surprized at the sight of strangers of our appearance, asked our business; when taking the little boy in my arms, I wiped away his tears, and kissing his pretty rosy cheeks, told him I would wipe away his mother's too, if I was able: at this he smiled; when, emptying some lumber out of a chair, while the mother made one ready for Amelia, we both sat down. At a loss how to introduce the cause of our visit, and willing to oblige them in a way as little painful as possible, I seemed mighty fond of the little creatures that were playing around me; then turning to the mother, desired that she would look upon us as her sincerest friends, and that we should think it a pleasure to serve her; but she thanked me in a manner that shewed that her hopes were at a low ebb, and too far sunk to be raised by glimmering prospects and airy visions. However, she called her husband: but, before he came, Amelia arose; and leaving me to comfort the distressed as my humanity directed, elated with the

agreeable

agreeable surprize she hoped to give me, went out with the rustick youth, and privately dispatched him to Marilla, to let her know where we were, and that her company, with her brother's, would be acceptable to us both. Mean while the master of the house, with more firmness in his countenance, but with eyes drooping with care, came to us from a back room, and related the cause of his misfortunes with that honest frankness and simplicity which always affects the mind, though uttered in the most plain and homely language. He told me, that by the excessive rains, which had enriched the farmers of the neighbouring hills with several successive years of plenty, he was reduced, from a state of affluence, to penury and indigence; that he should be obliged to sell the plentiful crop that covered his lands to a vast disadvantage, to satisfy his landlord's demands; and that he had no other prospect than to lose the fruit of his labours, to be turned out of all his possessions, and, perhaps, be glad to glean the fields he himself had sown; and all this for want of a small sum which his landlord had now a particular occasion for. Willing to shorten his uneasiness, I here interrupted him, to know what sum would remove his present anxiety; and, as soon as he had informed me, I told him, with a smile, that I thought myself very happy at having it in my power to give joy to an honest family; and at the same time emptied my purse upon the table. I now felt my heart overflow with a sympathetick extasy, arising from the transports I myself had occasioned. Thus, with a little gold that has long laid useless in my chest, and for which I have here no use, I have procured the happiness of a whole family, and given myself a delight more exquisite than I ever experienced from the like occasion; since the advantage they have received from it, as they told me, may probably redound to their children's children. What use could I possibly make of this hoarded pelf, to procure me equal satisfaction? Or what is the pleasure we receive from pride, the gratification of a luxurious appetite, or the indulgence of the highest animal delight, compared to this luxury of the mind, the more natural rapture which results from the gratifications of our humanity? But while the good people were loading me with their blessings, I had the agreeable surprize of seeing Amelia enter the room, accompanied by Lucius and his sister; for, as they lived but at a small distance from the farmer's, she chose to walk softly after the young man, in order to meet them, and to let them know that I was an entire stranger to the visit she requested from them. Seized with a sudden emotion, my heart fluttered with a painful joy, and throbbed with a sweet yet tumultuous extasy. I hastily arose, hardly having the power to stay to desire my old friends to take no notice of what had passed; and running to the door, in an eager transport embraced Marilla, at the same time shooting a glance at her dear brother. We went into the orchard together: we talked like friends who had not seen each other for a long time, full of spirit, full of affection; till at last, after having taken two or three turns, Amelia and Marilla told me, with a laugh, that they would leave me for a few minutes; and instantly striking off to the most distant part of the orchard, seated themselves under a tree, and, by their absence, left room for a more delightful conversation. But though Lucius was now very sensible that he was dear to me, he could not enter upon the tender subject without confusion: he at first enquired after my health; complained that he was denied the pleasure of seeing me; and then, with a sigh, let me know how much he thought himself obliged to Amelia for procuring him a satisfaction he had so long languished for. 'But why,' Sir,' said I, willing to draw him to an explanation, 'do 'you complain of your being deprived 'of my company; is that such a terri- 'ble misfortune?'—'Yes, my dear Fe- 'licia,' replied he, trembling, and casting down his eyes, 'it is an insupport- 'able misfortune. Did you but know, 'Madam, with what anguish I support 'your absence; with what cruel in- 'quietudes I count the tedious minutes, 'while my heart'—Here he paused, unable to proceed, while every joint quivered with fear; but at last resuming—'while my heart struggles to be 'near you; were you sensible of that 'tumult of passion, and all those name- 'less dear sensations which fill my breast; 'O Felicia! your wonder would cease, and 'you would rather be surprized that any 'consideration could prevent my flying 'to you!' His embarrassment now seemed to increase, while he waited for my answer; and, indeed, I was going to endeavour

deavour to rally him on his pretended Platonick friendſhip; to endeavour, I ſay, for I am ſadly afraid I ſhould have made but an odd appearance with my affected gaiety, for my heart was too much ſoftened to permit me to laugh at him; however, one touching glance changed my reſolution, and obliged me to behave more naturally; that is, to thank him for what was ſo perfectly agreeable to me. 'I am obliged 'to you, Sir,' ſaid I, 'for that deep 'concern you expreſs for me; but were 'I more ſenſible that I deſerved it, I 'might give greater credit to what you 'tell me: however, I can do no leſs than 'thank you for your complaiſance.'—'Ah! Madam,' returned he with more reſolution, while a darting joy flu ſhed in his cheek, and in a moment mingled an air of delight amidſt the tender languiſhment of his countenance, 'your 'merit ſufficiently authorizes the ardour 'of my paſſion. I feel the force of 'your charms; they run through my 'heart, and captivate every thought: 'but chiefly that amiable virtue, that 'ſanctity of manners, and all thoſe dear 'unutterable graces, which perpetually 'bloſſom with freſh beauties and un-'decaying charms, fill my raviſhed ſoul, 'and inſpire a tender admiration and 'diſtant awe.'

You ſee, Madam, that theſe ſilent lovers (who are ſtruck dumb with a guſh of paſſion too ſoft and powerful to be expreſſed) have their tongues no ſooner unlocked, than they burſt into heroicks, and talk as differently from the polite gentlemen of the more ſtubborn mould, who have language at command, as if they were another ſpecies of beings. Here the heart ſays every thing, and dictates not only the words, but the minuteſt glance, and the leaſt motion: every feature has a voice, and the whole man proclaims the power of love. For my part, I freely confeſs that flattery never appeared half ſo charming as it did now. A ſweet enthuſiaſm poſſeſſed all my ſoul, and I could not help thinking how much better this dear man deſerved a compliment of this kind than myſelf. But the next thought gave a bitter daſh to this exultation of heart, and made me reply, in a mild tone—'You are much to 'blame to entertain ſuch romantick ſen-'timents of me, which, I aſſure you, I 'have not vanity enough to think I de-'ſerve; but, however, were I ever ſo 'worthy of your eſteem, and tendereſt af-'fection, yet the thought that I am not 'at my own diſpoſal, and the difficulty 'you may expect to meet with from my 'father, who has an undoubted right to 'diſpoſe of me, ſhould make you endea-'vour to forget me, and conquer a paſſion 'which I fear will prove fatal to your re-'poſe.' This anſwer gave an immediate damp to his tranſport, and ſeemed to throw him into a freſh confuſion: however, fixing his eyes upon me, with a languid yet piercing air—'O my dear 'Felicia,' cried he, 'do you indeed 'blame the unconquerable tenderneſs 'of my heart? Would you perſuade me 'to eraſe your lovely image from my 'ſoul? Alas! I am too ſenſible that I 'have no reaſon to flatter myſelf that 'your father will ever favour my aſpir-'ing wiſhes; yet, whatever is the con-'ſequence, I muſt love you ſtill—I muſt 'ever love you. Nor can I, though ſur-'rounded with difficulties that oppoſe 'my happineſs, even wiſh that I loved 'you leſs. But ah! Madam, if you 'deſire that I ſhould forget you, I am 'wretched indeed!'

With what irreſiſtible ſoftneſs were theſe laſt words uttered! His eyes ſwelled with a ſtarting tear, which with conſcious dignity and ſhame he endeavoured to call back, as a mark of a too effeminate weakneſs. Every ſpeaking feature deſcribed the ſtrong emotions which agitated his ſoul with all the torturing agonies that can ariſe from the tendereſt deſpair; while pity and love, and dear compaſſion, ſhot through my heart, and filled all my mind with a virtuous and decent ſoftneſs. I looked upon him; but what did this look tell him? Certainly all that I felt; for my eyes were then incapable of ſpeaking a falſhood. 'O Lucius!' ſaid I, 'need I tell you, 'that I am far from wiſhing it in your 'power to forget me? Yet, methinks, 'if that was neceſſary to your hap-'pineſs, I could ſuffer a great deal to 'procure it; and perhaps a conqueſt 'of this kind would not coſt me leſs 'than it would you. Could you but 'procure my father's conſent, we might 'both be happy—but that, I fear, you 'will never obtain. No; neither you 'nor I ought to hope for it. And I 'here proteſt that I will never be yours 'without his approbation. Not even 'your merit, great as it is, ſhall ever 'make me forget that I have a father—

'a kind

'a kind and indulgent father. Never 'shall any consideration prevail with 'me to forfeit my duty to God, or to 'him. This resolution you will not, 'you cannot condemn.'—'No, my dear 'Felicia,' returned he, with his eyes sparkling with a languid joy; 'my love 'is too pure to suffer me either to in'volve you in your father's displeasure, 'or to tempt you to offend Heaven: so 'far from laying snares for your virtue 'and honour, I would die in their de'fence, and sacrifice all that is dear to 'me to preserve them inviolate. But, 'O what transporting goodness! Do 'you indeed love me? Is it possible? 'Help me to support the rapture of this 'extatick thought—or rather teach me 'how to merit your father's favour. 'What means would I not employ to 'obtain it! Sure, if he is such a tender 'father as you describe him, he must 'have some regard to your inclinations 'in an affair of such infinite consequence 'to your happiness. But, O this dis'proportion of fortune! that is the ob'stacle. And can there be a greater in 'the opinion of a tender parent? Yes, 'sure, to a wise and tender parent there 'may.'

But, Madam, I must not forget to mention one circumstance that I am sure will make you smile. In the height of his rapture he seized my hand, and squeezing it with a strong and sudden grasp, hurt my fingers so, that I could hardly forbear crying out; I am sure, if he had observed my looks, he would have found that I made most frightful faces: he then pressed it to his lips, and taking it from thence, grasped my poor fingers again with the same convulsion of passion, still slackening the tender pressure as his thoughts returned to my father; he at last held my hand so loose, that my numbed fingers could scarcely feel that he held them at all. But a shame on my extreme insensibility, that gave occasion to these intolerable extasies! What tender words had I uttered! Dear Madam, let no prudes or coquettes ever read my letters, for I shall certainly never be able to stand the censure of the one, or the raillery of the other. But to proceed.

Melting with the high-wrought rapture which seemed to sublime our souls, while it raised us to a degree of felicity almost too exquisite to be supported, we mutually opened our hearts, and with a confidence of being beloved, reciprocally confessed the tender sensations that swelled our bosoms. All *my* soul was delight! a delight pure as the rapture of ætherial spirits! *his* transporting extasy!

'Tis not the coarser tie of human laws,
Unnatural oft, and foreign to the mind,
That binds our peace, but harmony itself,
Attuning all our passions into love;
Where friendship full exerts his softest power;
Perfect esteem and sympathy of soul,
Thought meeting thought, and will preventing will,
With boundless confidence: for nought but love
Can answer love, and render bliss secure.'

THOMPSON.

But, lost in this charming intercourse of souls, we forgot that it was time to depart; till my cousin, with an unwelcome intrusion, and more unwelcome message, came to put us in mind that the sun was setting, and that it was time to return home; when with reluctant hearts, after bidding a tender adieu, and embracing Marilla, I tore myself from them, and hasted back with Amelia to my aunt.

You, I hope, Madam, will excuse the weakness I so freely confess to you: softened by the scene of distress I had just been a witness of, the unexpected presence of my dear Lucius had probably a much greater effect than it would have had, if my mind had not been thus previously intendered. However, nothing can ennoble the soul like a virtuous passion; it inspires a thousand delicacies, a thousand virtues, which, without it, we should certainly have no idea of.

I am, Madam, with my sincerest respects to his lordship, and my most ardent prayers for the continuance of your mutual happiness, your ladyship's most obedient servant,

FELICIA.

LETTER XIV.

MADAM,

THOUGH your impatience to hear from me is very obliging, yet it lays me under a necessity of entertaining you with abundance of impertinences; but if trifles can entertain, you have no reason to be dissatisfied. Wrapt up in obscurity,

obscurity, I hear nothing of the fate of princes, or the fall of contending nations. I have now no ambition to enquire after such important events: an humble swain engrosses all my attention, though I hardly ever see him. I converse with few besides the people of the groves, who (pretty warblers!) are my constant companions; yet you would have me incessantly writing. Upon my word, Madam, you are quite unreasonable. I can hardly think it possible that a month's silence can give you all this impatience. But your friendship is an excuse that I must admit. I therefore leave the rooks and daws, which with their harsh discordant pipes aid the concert of the warbling linnet, the thrush, the wood-lark, who, prodigal of harmony, run through their wild variety of notes. Nor shall the rosy-breasted robin, emblem of innocence! the mellow bull-finch, or the dying cadence of the high-soaring songster of the sky, nor all the winged choristers who chant their loves, and in 'fluttering courtship pour 'out their little souls in mellifluous 'numbers,' prevent my being impertinent when you command it.

My mind is now in an unaccountable situation, strangely divided between hope and fear, and tossed with a variety of contending passions. Still teazed with the addresses of Mellifont, his company becomes every day more insupportable; his vanity grows insufferable; and the very means he employs to insinuate himself into my esteem, heightens my aversion. Not that he is really a disagreeable companion; but while he is a perpetual obstacle to my seeing Lucius, it is no wonder if his gayest flights, humorous and diverting as they may appear to others, only serve to increase my spleen and heighten my disgust. The consideration that his unwelcome intrusion deprives me of that dear and softening pleasure I should otherwise enjoy from the cordial glances, and all the pleasing intercourses of love that might pass between Lucius and me, poisons the satisfaction I should otherwise receive from his sprightly airs; airs that have not the least conformity with the tenderly pensive disposition of my mind.

One day last week being disturbed with abundance of gloomy reflections, all turning upon the absence of my lover, and the opposition I expect to meet with from my father, Mellifont glided into the room with a dancing step and his usual assurance, and an affectation of all that ease and negligence of behaviour, that can only spring from a mind entirely satisfied with itself. He sung *Rosy Bowers*, hummed an Italian air, and every minute digressed from the song, either to make an application to me, or to utter some tender thing which intruded upon his thoughts; but every thing was expressed with such a mixture of the soft and the ridiculous, as would have forced a smile from any one that had less reason to be melancholy. But I was too perverse to be moved by his fantastick behaviour, to shew, even by my looks, the least mark of approbation.

Deaf to the musick of his voice, which is really very harmonious, and untouched by all his arts to charm me, he insensibly became more grave; when laying aside his frolick airs—'Will no-'thing satisfy you, my charmer,' said he, 'unless you see me sighing at your feet? 'Would you have me in dull languishment admire your beauties, and with 'a heavy sobbing heart tell you all my 'pain? Well, Madam, I confess myself your slave; but at the same time 'beg, that, cruel as you are, you will 'not triumph in your conquest, and insult over the victim of your charms.'

Here he threw himself upon his knee, and taking one of my hands, which he tenderly pressed in his—'See, my dear,' said he, 'as great a conquest as ever 'love has made. In vain I have struggled to regain my liberty. All my 'wishes center in you; I love you with 'all the passionate softness that can fill 'a human breast: as tenderly as—as—'Nay, Madam, for Heaven's sake, don't 'laugh at me,' continued he, seeing me smile; 'but tell me sincerely now, don't 'I look very silly? I sigh like the famed knight-errants of old, and like them 'bending before the divine object of my 'sublimest wishes, beg, O thou adorable 'fair! that thou wilt mitigate the severity of my unhappy destiny, or suffer 'me to expire at thy feet.' Here making a pause, he gently sunk his head upon my lap; when snatching away my hand, and precipitately rising, he could not prevent his falling upon the floor. Not all my melancholy could now prevent my laughing, had I not endeavoured to hinder it, in order to carry on this comick scene. 'Lie there,' cried I, 'thou 'unworthy knight, nor ever more ap-

'pear

'pear before me, till thou bringeſt me 'the heads of thoſe ſavage monſters that 'infeſt the woods, the trophies of thy 'proweſs and renown.' At this I flung out of the room, as if in a mighty paſſion; and ſtepping into the thickeſt part of the garden, indulged for a few minutes the burſt of laughter which I with difficulty reſtrained till I was out of his hearing.

How dreadfully afraid is poor Mellifont of my abuſing the power I have over him! He was juſt diſſolving in ſoftneſs; but in the moment when he was giving way to his paſſion, and throwing aſide his ſprightlineſs, which was now become unnatural, a ſmile recalled back his fears; his dread of my tyranny returned; and, to prevent my taking advantage of his weakneſs, he was willing to turn all he had ſaid into ridicule.

However, when I began to reflect a little, I could not help being afraid that I had affronted him by my ill-manners in leaving him ſo abruptly; and therefore, having now been near an hour in the garden, and imagining he was gone, returned to my aunt, in order to make my excuſes to her; to whom I fancied he had complained, and who, probably, would blame me for carrying the jeſt too far. But in my way, ſtepping into the room where I had left him upon the floor, I found my doughty knight ſtrutting about with an old ruſty helmet on his head, and in his hand a pike, which ſerved for a ſpear, upon which was fixed the head of a fox, which he had luckily run down the day before. When ſtamping with his foot, his truſty ſquire entered with the ſtuffed ſkins of ſeveral badgers, and other beaſts of prey, the ſpoils of his hall; when Mellifont bending one knee, laid them at my feet, and reſting upon his ſpear—'See, fair 'princeſs,' ſaid he, bowing low his head, 'a knight renowned for acts of 'chivalry, who lays at your divine feet 'the ravagers of the mountains and the 'vallies; but lower ſtill he would lay 'his heart. Incomparable lady, you 'ſee a ſlave whoſe magnanimous arm 'has made theſe horrid monſters trem'ble; yet his life depends on the radi'ance of your ſmiles. Soften then with 'pity the beams of your eyes, leſt their 'lightning, with too refulgent glory, 'ſhould burn his ſhrivelled heart to 'cinders.'

This ſet ſpeech, which he uttered with the utmoſt gravity and ſolemnity, he had doubtleſs ſtudied before I entered the room, and which he concluded with bending low to kiſs my feet: when ſtruggling againſt a ſmile, I aſſumed an air of inexorable ſternneſs, and looking down upon him with a lofty ſuperiority and contempt—'Avaunt, caitif 'vile,' cried I, 'and think not to abuſe 'my ears with thy audacious forgeries. 'Are theſe, wretch, the trophies of thy 'valour! Where are the diſtreſſed vir'gins that thou haſt delivered from the 'poiſonous talons of fiery dragons, or 'the dreadful gripe of monſtrous gi'ants? Fly, coward, and attempt not 'to abuſe my credulity with the car'caſes of inſects, or my weak arm ſhall 'chaſtiſe thy temerity!' Here I turned haſtily from him, and walking with a majeſtick ſtateline's, ſeated myſelf at the other end of the room, in an eaſy chair, with as much dignity as if it had been a chair of ſtate. But I had no ſooner turned my back, than throwing away his maſking ornaments, he ſtepped up to me, ſinging "Why do you fly, my "deareſt?" and immediately dropping his ſong—'Don't you think, Madam,' cried he, 'that we have acted our parts 'to perfection? Upon my word, you do 'every thing with a grace. Your every 'air is charming. I only am defective; 'for I find I ſhall do no wonders in the 'character of a redoubted champion for 'love; ſince, after all my endeavours, I 'have been ſhamefully degraded, and 'caſt from the dignity of my ſublime 'ſtation. Yet, Madam, you are ſen'ſible it was in diſguiſe that you made 'me a convert to love. Adorned like 'Flora with all the blooming graces of 'the ſmiling year, and incircled with 'the united fragrance of every opening 'flower, you captivated all my ſenſes, 'and inſtantly made me that odd crea'ture called a whining, ſighing lover. 'Upon my word, Madam, you could 'not have made a ſtranger metamor'phoſis had you fixed me a ſtatue.' Here he pauſed; but inſtantly recollecting himſelf—'O Madam,' cried he, ſmiling and rubbing his hands, 'I have 'a lucky thought; permit me to aſſume 'another diſguiſe: as you firſt appeared 'to me a goddeſs, let me for once be 'diſguiſed like a god; you ſhall receive 'me crowned with ivy, and the glow-

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'ing cluſter of the ſwelling vine. In 'this appearance who knows what won- 'ders I may perform! Beſides, can any 'thing better expreſs the felicity that 'would, I am ſure, ariſe from our union, 'than an emblem of that paradiſe, 'where the ſoft beauties of the opening 'year ſhall be blended with the yellow 'fruits of autumn, and all the charms 'of the luxuriant flowing bowl! In 'what exquiſite happineſs ſhall we ſpend 'our days! you ever blooming; I, like 'Bacchus, ever frolick, gay, and 'ſprightly!'

'No, no, Sir,' ſaid I, 'the ſeaſons 'may take their courſe for me; nor will 'I have any thing to do with your 'drunken godſhip. I therefore beg it 'as a favour, that I may not be diſturb- 'ed with ſuch fooleries, which are very 'diſagreeable to me.' I had hardly uttered theſe words, when, with the ut- moſt ſurprize, I ſaw Lucius and Marilla enter the room; but it was a ſurprize accompanied with delight. I viewed his looks with conſcious innocence, while no ſuſpecting fear dimmed his eyes, nor wan jealouſy diſcoloured his cheek. While I was embracing Marilla, Lucius and Mellifont met each other with the freedom of perſons who had been long acquainted; and turning to me—'I have 'heard,' ſaid he, 'that you are to have 'a little diverſion; and if it is not over, 'would be glad to have a part in it. 'Hail! noble knight,' cried he, clap- ping Mellifont on the ſhoulder, 'what 'mighty feat of arms is to be done with 'your helmet and lance?' Mellifont ſeemed here a little confuſed, while I began to fear that my lover was ac- quainted with the paſſion of his rival; but examining again his countenance, my uneaſineſs vaniſhed, for it had not the leaſt tincture of diſorder. But find- ing that Mellifont made no reply, 'Come, my friend, no evaſions,' re- joined he; 'I met your ſervant an hour 'ago running home with all poſſible 'ſpeed, and in ſuch haſte that he had 'hardly time to tell me the whimſical 'meſſage you had given him, to ſtrip 'your hall of it's grim ornaments, and 'to bring them here with thoſe ruſty 'pieces of ancient heroiſm, your helmet 'and lance. And the lady of this houſe, 'doing my ſiſter and I the honour to 'deſire our company, I came filled with 'the hopes of ſeeing ſome of your di- 'verting extravagancies.'

Here Mellifont, aſſuming a chearful air, began the relation of the odd piece of Quixotiſm which he had carried on with ſuch humour; and my aunt and Amelia coming in, could not help joining with Lucius and Marilla in frequently interrupting him, by burſting into a general laugh; and indeed it was im- poſſible for any one in the company to forbear: for though the ſtory was comical enough of itſelf, yet the ſevere manner in which he laſhed himſelf, with the romantick reflections he made upon his diſgrace, rendered it infinitely more extravagant. Nor indeed is it poſſible to give you any idea of this part of our di- verſion, except I could give you the varied tone of his voice, his looks, his air, and his minuteſt geſture.

The evening was ſpent with abun- dance of gaiety, while Lucius's good ſenſe, and Mellifont's agreeable viva- city, furniſhed a great part of our enter- tainment. Nor were ſome of thoſe ſoft and refined pleaſures wanting, which I now find make up the moſt exquiſite part of human happineſs. 'Tis true, I could not enter into a particular conver- ſation with my lover, much leſs indulge the innocent ſatisfaction of a private interview; but yet I ſat near him, and methought my heart beat in that ſitua- tion much more freely than when he was far diſtant. My ſoul itſelf was all harmony! and, inſpired by his preſence, every vein was harmony too. Strange! that the mind can be ſenſible of ſuch delight from only a conſciouſneſs of a dear object's being near! What mag- netick influence, what attractive power, is in the perſon beloved, that from a circumſtance ſo ſmall can inſpire ſuch tender joys, ſuch delicate ſenſibilities of happineſs! 'Tis true, I ſaw him with pleaſure, I heard him with pleaſure too; but yet I had an additional delight, more conſtant and uniform, from my being conſcious that I was near him, which every ſeat farther from him would have ſenſibly decreaſed. You, Madam, can perhaps account for theſe pleaſing emotions; and I deſire you would let me know if you think it unreaſonable, that upon theſe occaſions there ſhould be ſome ſecret ſympathies, ſome dear inexpreſſi- ble ways, by which ſouls expand them- ſelves towards the dear perſon, and join in a ſoft etherial embrace. I know you will laugh at this whimſical conceit; but no matter. The evening, I ſay,

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was spent agreeably, though we were obliged to be very cautious in our looks, to prevent suspicion; and indeed I was quite sparing in mine, for I seldom indulged the pleasure of examining his countenance; a precaution that was now absolutely necessary. However, might I frequently enjoy Lucius's company in the same manner, I should be more contented; but hardly ever to see him, and at the same time to have no prospect of having the difficulties removed which obstruct this happiness, I freely confess is more than I am well able to bear. I am afraid of having our mutual passion discovered, I tremble with the most dreadful apprehensions for fear it should come to my father's ears; and yet, without this should be the case, it will for ever continue impossible for me to taste any true felicity.

O my dear friend, if my happiness is really dear to you, give me your advice, and teach me if possible to unite my duty to my father with the tender sentiments I feel for Lucius, and to make them both subservient to the highest pleasure I can enjoy on earth. By what means shall I attack my father's heart? By what means shall Lucius procure his favour, and make him sensible of his merit? To effect this will be a task hard and difficult; and to have a share in promoting my happiness, will be an employment worthy of your friendship, and the most endearing proof you can possibly give me of your esteem and affection. With the sincerest and most tender respect, I am your ladyship's most obedient servant,

FELICIA.

LETTER XV.

IS it possible, Madam, that you can really give me such advice? What, to forget my dear father! to steel my heart against the soft impressions of filial duty! to be insensible of the strong and tender ties of nature, of the affectionate cares his heart has felt for me, and all those numberless instances of paternal kindness which I have so often received from him! Shall I throw a cloud over the flattering prospects he has raised for me, and disappoint all his fond views for my happiness, by casting off that right which nature, and the much more prevailing force of tenderness and love, have given him over me! No, Madam, I shall never be guilty of such ingratitude. I will never dispose of myself without his consent; nor shall all your arguments, how plausible soever, prevail with me to give him a minute's uneasiness.

Pardon the freedom with which I reject your proposal; you never knew what it was to have parents, and therefore can have but faint ideas of that solicitude, that unwearied concern, which employ their thoughts; much less can you be sensible of the unspeakable obligations I am under to mine, the best of parents, and the best of fathers! But sure I am mistaken: you must have very strong ideas of paternal tenderness, to say, that however offended he may be at first, affection will soon take place of resentment, and at last swallow up all thought of displeasure; when his eyes will be open to the merits of Lucius, and he may possibly be brought even to approve of our union; a reconciliation which you kindly promise to use your utmost endeavour to procure for us. But, ah! my dear friend! can I presume on that affection which makes him dear to me? Can I offend him, from the thought that he is far from deserving such usage from me? And can I disclaim his authority and counsel, from the reflection that he deserves all my confidence, and my most grateful and affectionate regards? No, my dear, you must excuse me, your friendship blinds your judgment, and makes you give me advice that you would be far from taking yourself, were you in my circumstances, You would then have considered the vexation that must arise from a disappointment of the fondest hopes; the just provocation of seeing goodness abused, and the painful mixture of anger and love, arising in the mind of an indulgent father, as the greatest evils: nor could you, I am sure, think of being the cause of all these dreadful perturbations without starting back, and instantly recoiling into duty.

Your ladyship finds now what a troublesome persecution your kindness brings upon you: instead of acknowledging your goodness, and thanking you for the obliging concern you express for my happiness, I have been haranguing for I dont know how long on my duty to my ever-honoured papa, in order to let you see what a good girl

I am. But dont be offended, Madam; I have only been anticipating your own thoughts on the rights of parents. You will ſoon be of my mind; and a few months hence, I hope, will be able to write on this ſubject with a much better grace than I can pretend to do; ſince you will then, it is likely, find abundance of thoſe tender cares, thoſe dear undeſcribable ſolicitudes ariſing in your heart, which I form but a diſtant idea of, from the impreſſions I have received from the paternal affection of one of the beſt of fathers.

The generous pity you expreſs for Mellifont, proceeds undoubtedly from your humanity and natural goodneſs; but I find this pity does not deprive you of the pleaſure of diverting yourſelf with the oddneſs of his behaviour, and the ridiculous manner in which he pays me his addreſſes: but I am going to ſurprize you, by letting you ſee that he is no longer to be pitied, ſince he is in a fair way of regaining his liberty, or at leaſt of falling into a more ſupportable bondage.

If you remember, Madam, I gave you in one of my letters an account of the concealed paſſion Amelia entertained for this gay ſpark of mine; but, hopeleſs as it then appeared, the engaging ſoftneſs of her behaviour, and the natural ſweetneſs of her diſpoſition, added to that eaſy, unaffected freedom, and artleſs innocence, which attends every thing ſhe does, ſeem at length to have made an impreſſion on him. But you could never gueſs from whom I received this news—from Lucius, Madam. He made his rival his confident. And here follows the letter I have juſt received from him on this occaſion.

'LOVELY FELICIA,

'DELIGHTFUL as the reflection of your goodneſs is, while 'I indulge the tranſporting remembrance of that charming air with which 'you frankly confeſſed the tender regard you ſhould always have for my 'happineſs—You love! you return my 'paſſion! what an extatick thought! 'yet it cannot enable me to ſupport the 'tedious delay, the painful abſence, the 'torturing ſuſpenſe, and the pleaſing 'yet dreadful mixture of hope and fear 'with which I wait to know that ſentence from your father, which muſt confirm me bleſt beyond expreſſion, 'or throw the thickeſt gloom over all 'my joys. O, my dear, with what 'ardour do I long to ſee you! I have 'a thouſand things to ſay.

'Yeſterday my friend Mellifont came 'to ſee me, with an air more thoughtful than ſeemed conſiſtent with his 'ſprightly volatile temper; when our 'friendſhip, which began very early, 'and which, upon his late return from 'the tour of Europe, has been revived 'with all it's warmth, engaged me to 'preſs him to communicate the cauſe 'of his diſcontent. He told me that 'was the deſign of his viſit; and propoſing our going into my ſtudy, where 'we might be ſecure from interruption, 'began there a ſtory which filled my 'mind with every wild agitation. "It "is with ſhame," ſaid he, "that I "confeſs my weakneſs; I love Felicia." 'O what a ſtab did theſe words give 'me! His wealth, his form, his wit, 'his humour, with every qualification 'capable of charming the fair, ruſhed 'upon my mind, and gave me the firſt 'pangs of jealouſy, tormenting paſſion! 'But recollecting that he was certainly 'ignorant of my being his rival, I endeavoured to arm myſelf with patience. 'He then enumerated your ſeveral perfections, and dwelt upon your charms, 'while every commendation increaſed 'my diſquiet. O Madam, can you 'forgive my unjuſt fears? fears injurious to your honour! But while I 'made the compariſon between him and 'myſelf, how was it poſſible to help being alarmed, ſince I myſelf muſt have 'juſtified your choice in rejecting me for 'him? But theſe fears were ſhort-lived and tranſient, they ſoon gave way 'to a healing joy which compoſed the 'impetuous tumult of my ſoul; and 'with the utmoſt delight I heard him 'add—"Yet you would admire, Lu-"cius, to ſee how cold, how inſenſible "ſhe is of all my endeavours to pleaſe "her. I meet with nothing but per-"fect indifference. Her very looks "ſpeak her inſenſibility. Ah! had ſhe but "half the winning ſoftneſs, the tender "graces, of Amelia!—but ſhe is in-"capable of ſoftneſs. But don't you "think Amelia pretty near as beauti-"ful as Felicia? It muſt be confeſſed, "however, that this lady has a much "more agreeable temper. What a "pleaſing air! what a charming "ſimplicity! Don't you think it would

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" pique Felicia's pride to see me change " the object of my homage, and pay " those assiduous addresses to her cou- " sin, which she with so much scorn " contemns? It is a pleasant thought; " and I am resolved to punish this " haughty beauty, by letting her see, " that it is now out of her power to " render me that whining ridiculous " fellow she endeavours to make me. " Tell me now, Lucius; am I not in " the right?"—" They are both ladies " of extraordinary merit," replied I, ' with the utmost calmness; " but you " ought not to impute Felicia's dis- " like to a want of natural goodness. " Pray, Mellifont, is it such a crime to " be blind to your perfections? She " would doubtless approve of you as a " friend, though not as a lover: and I " think I know her well enough to af- " firm that, so far from being offended " at your transferring your affections " to her cousin, she will use her endea- " vours to promote your mutual feli- " city."—" Do you think so?" re- ' turned he; " then I am resolved to try " the experiment. I have found some- " thing so engaging in Amelia's beha- " viour, while I paid my addresses to " her cousin, that I have long looked " upon her with the highest esteem. " She pleases without design; and does " the most trifling actions with such a " grace, that they forcibly insinuate " themselves into the heart. It is, I " am sure, in her power to make me " happy." I endeavoured to fix this ' resolution; and, after several other ' things being said on the same subject, ' he took leave, with a firm intention of ' transferring all his tender sentiments ' to Amelia.

' O, my dear Felicia! tell me what I ' must think of myself for this beha- ' viour? What judgment will you form ' of it? Sure it cannot offend you! ' You are too artless to dissemble either ' with him or me. But, however, I ' beg to see you; and, with the most af- ' fectionate ardour, intreat you to give ' me an opportunity of expressing my ' gratitude, and telling you how much ' I am, dearest creature! your obliged ' and affectionate servant,

' LUCIUS.'

As soon as I had read this letter, I left my chamber, and made haste to communicate it to Amelia, who I did not question would be highly pleased with the contents; but, to my no small surprize, as well as satisfaction, I found her engaged in a close conversation with Mellifont: so returning to my apartment, scrawled over the above, in order to send it away by this night's post. I have hardly time now to thank you in form for your many favours; and therefore, with my affectionate prayers for the uninterrupted continuance of your felicity, I in haste subscribe myself, your ladyship's most obliged friend,

FELICIA.

LETTER XVI.

LAST week, my dear friend, I informed you that the gay and janty Mellifont, finding himself unable, with all his airs, to ingratiate himself so far into my esteem, as to prevail with me to listen with pleasure to his addresses, was so poor a hero as to change his mistress, and direct his smiles and sighs to Amelia; a thing which, however common in real life, is seldom or never heard of in romance: yet this instance of his prudence, so far from alarming my pride, is a constant source of satisfaction and joy. And if you have yet read over my letter, you must have observed, too, that I told you I left them together while I wrote you an account of this change in my affairs.

As soon as he was gone, Amelia came running to my chamber with her eyes sparkling with joy, and an air of the utmost satisfaction. ' What do you think, ' my dear!' cried she, as soon as she entered the room; ' the engaging Melli- ' font has been saying some of the most ' agreeable, tender things, to me. O, he ' is a charming man! He came to-day, ' as usual; when thinking that it was to ' you we owed his visit, I told him I ' would let you know that he was here, ' at the same time turned in order to go ' and seek for you, but he prevented me. ' He took hold of my hand, and desiring ' me to stay, said that his business was ' now with me. I went with him into ' the parlour; when seating himself by ' me, with such a soft look as I have ' sometimes seen him fix upon you—" I " know, Madam," said he, " you will " be surprized at what I am going to " say to you. Felicia's rigour, and " your charms, have cured my passion

" for her. I have been unable to ſup-
" port that lady's conſtant indifference,
" and am not of a temper to indulge a
" ſoftneſs that can be of no ſervice to
" me. I will never be the dupe of
" a girl's vanity, nor whine in doleful
" ditty the diſmal ſtory of deſpairing
" love. I am reſolved to be happy; and
" would have you obſerve, that it is
" out of the power of any of your fair
" ſex to make me miſerable." This,
' Madam,' continued Amelia, ' was to
' prevent my uſing him as you have
' done; for he immediately added ſo
' many agreeable compliments, and ſuch
' ſtrong proteſtations of the ſincerity of
' his love, that I could never be weary
' of hearing him. O he is a charming
' man! This change is happy for us
' both; is it not, Madam? I dare ſay,
' he is perfectly ſincere.'

Here Amelia took time to breathe; for her extaſy had carried her on with ſuch rapidity, that, in the exultation of her heart, ſhe hardly knew how to give a moment's truce to her tranſport. Her whole ſoul overflowed with joy; and it overflowed ſo faſt, that her utterance could hardly keep pace with the ſwift courſe of her ideas. The moſt trifling word had the air of rapture, and every ſentence the dignity of triumph.

However, ſhe no ſooner gave me leave to ſpeak, than embracing her with much affection—' Yes, my dear,' cried I, ſmiling, ' this revolution is happy for us ' both, and I ſincerely congratulate you ' on the conqueſt of a heart that has ſo ' long been dear to you. Lucius has ' loſt a rival that he had reaſon to fear, ' and I have no longer the dread of diſ- ' obliging my father by refuſing to ' marry a gentleman I cannot love: but ' I have yet no proſpect of his ever giv- ' ing Lucius his conſent, that is as far ' off as ever; while you, who yeſterday ' were ready to envy the poor Felicity I ' enjoyed of having my almoſt hopeleſs ' paſſion returned, have in a moment ob- ' tained your wiſhes. My aunt will ' approve your mutual tenderneſs, and ' in a few days cement your happy ' union. How vaſtly is your happineſs ' ſuperior to mine!'—' O, my dear Fe- ' licia!' returned ſhe again, ' ' can't ' you rejoice with me without theſe bit- ' ter reflections? Expect the ſame de- ' lightful turn in your affairs, and de- ' pend upon my aſſiſtance in procuring ' it. A father's compliance is not ſure ' ſo hard to obtain, when the felicity of ' a dear and only child is at ſtake. Let ' us communicate every thing to Lucius. ' I will engage my mamma, as ſoon as ' poſſible, to take us with her to pay ' his mother and Marilla a viſit. We ' ſhall find him at home. He ſhall know ' he has had a rival, and we will tell him ' the reaſon of it's being kept ſo long a ' ſecret.'—' He knows already the ſtate ' of our affairs,' replied I, ' and had ac- ' quainted me with them before you ' knew your own happineſs. Here are ' a few lines that I received from him ' on this ſubject, juſt after I roſe from ' dinner.'

At this ſhe took the letter out of my hand with an eager ſurprize; her face was covered with a modeſt bluſh, which diſcovered ſome confuſion; and her eyes were in a moment glewed to the paper, which ſeemed to renew her joy. She read it over ſeveral times, and ſeemed to dwell with extaſy on that part which related the converſation between my lover and Mellifont; but at laſt returning it—' This is a proof,' cried ſhe, with a freſh kindling ſatisfaction in her looks, ' that he is ſincere in his profeſſions. It ' is not a raſh haſty fit of diſguſt that ' makes him fly to me: he has exa- ' mined his heart; he conſults his friend; ' he loves me almoſt as well as I do ' him. This authorizes the delight I ' feel, and proves that I have not been ' miſtaken in thinking him ſincere. He ' has fixed his choice, and I ſhall be ' happy!'

Theſe words were inſpired by a tranſport that made her exalt her voice much above her uſual manner of ſpeaking; ſo that my aunt, who was entering the room at the ſame time, heard her very diſtinctly. We both ſaw her in the ſame moment, and both were under ſome confuſion at this unexpected interruption, ſince we could not gueſs how much ſhe had overheard of what we were unwilling to inform her of. However, this diſorder was very ſhort; for ſhe came forwards with a ſmile, accompanied with an air that had not the leaſt mark of diſpleaſure. ' Heigh-day!' cried ſhe, with her eyes alternately fixed upon her daughter and me, ' what is the matter, pray? ' What! all in raptures? May not ' your mother, Amelia, partake of your ' ſatisfaction? I am come to claim a ' ſhare in your confidence, and to de- ' ſire you would let me know Melli-

' font's

'font's buſineſs with you to-day, and 'the ſubſtance of that long converſation 'you had together. Come, be free, my 'dear, and tell me all.'

Here I found that ſhe was ſtill ignorant of Lucius's paſſion; when obſerving that Amelia caſt down her eyes, and, with a viſible diſorder, heſitated how to reply, I inſtantly removed her embarraſſment. 'O Madam,' ſaid I, 'we 'have ſtrange things to tell you! Mellifont, finding my heart too flinty to 'be ſoftened by all his endeavours, has 'ſhook off my chains, and ſeeks for 'happineſs from the more gentle diſpoſition of Amelia's ſoul. While paying his addreſſes to me, he diſcovered 'a thouſand charms in her; and therefore, wiſely conſulting his own happineſs, has changed the object of a 'hopeleſs paſſion for one who he has 'reaſon to flatter himſelf will prove 'more favourable; and I dare ſay, Madam, ſince you approved of his being 'your nephew, you will be not leſs 'willing he ſhould be your ſon.'—'No, child,' returned ſhe; 'ſo far from having any objections to him, I freely 'confeſs that I ſhall be proud of his 'alliance. But are you ſure that he is 'ſincere in his pretenſions? Inferior as 'Amelia's fortune will be to his, I 'ſhould highly reſent my daughter's being made a property of. This is perhaps only an artifice by which he hopes 'to awaken your jealouſy.'—'My jealouſy, Madam!' cried I, with ſome warmth; 'no, he never could have the 'vanity to think it. I dare ſay he is in 'earneſt; and, ſo far from being offended at his preferring my couſin to 'me, I rejoice in his change, and look 'upon it with a peculiar ſatisfaction.'—'Well, whatever is his deſign,' rejoined my aunt, 'a little time will diſcover it. However, Felicia, I would 'have you believe, that I am not much 'leſs concerned for your happineſs than 'I am for Amelia's: you are both very 'dear to me; but your affections are 'perhaps already engaged.' Here I bluſhed in my turn, which I fancy ſhe took notice of; for, after a ſhort pauſe, ſhe only added—'But it is not my buſineſs to examine you on this ſubject, 'though I ſhould be very glad to have 'a ſhare in your confidence. As for 'you, Amelia, I hope you won't ſcruple to diſcover to me the ſituation of 'your heart. You know I am too tender a mother not to conſult your inclinations as well as my own.' Theſe laſt words were expreſſed in a moſt moving tone; while my couſin, who had been hitherto ſilent, could not conceal the riſing tear, which with mute eloquence expreſſed her gratitude, and thanked her for her indulgent goodneſs: when ſtarting up, ſhe ſprung into her arms, and gave her a feeling embrace; which the fond mother, with conſcious happineſs in her looks, returned with equal ardour.

You cannot conceive, Madam, how much I was affected with the goodneſs of the parent, and the confidence which it immediately produced in the mind of the child. Amelia, diſſolved in filial tenderneſs, acknowledged her regard for Mellifont; while my aunt approved her paſſion—approved it with an air of joy, though ſtill doubting the ſincerity of his pretenſions—when, to remove her ſcruples, my couſin promiſed to make her a judge, by giving her an account of his future behaviour.

I was all this while a ſtupid obſerver, and was almoſt aſhamed not to have a ſhare in theſe pleaſing careſſes. 'Do I 'indulge a paſſion,' ſaid I to myſelf, 'that I am afraid of acknowledging to 'a perſon ſo well worthy of all my confidence? Will a lady that has ſo much 'conſideration for her daughter as to 'tell her that ſhe is too tender a parent 'not to conſult her child's inclinations 'rather than her own; a woman that is 'ſuch an excellent judge of real merit; 'be inſenſible of the perfections of my 'dear Lucius, and diſapprove of my 'paſſion for ſo valuable, ſo worthy a 'man; one whom ſhe treats with ſo 'much reſpect, and on whoſe virtue, 'ſtrong ſenſe, and other valuable accompliſhments, I have heard her make ſo 'many encomiums? I can't believe 'it. She will be pleaſed, too, with my 'confidence, approve my diſcernment, 'and give me her aſſiſtance to work 'upon my father. Well, then, I will 'boldly confeſs my tender ſentiments 'for this engaging youth; and, unterrified at the ſmallneſs of his eſtate, 'will plead the cauſe of virtue againſt 'that of wealth; I will gain her over 'by my reſpectful confidence, work 'upon her pity, and engage her to give 'us her friendly aſſiſtance, her compaſſionate and endearing advice.'

This was my final reſolution: but though

though I had no reaſon to prevent my putting it in execution, yet I no ſooner attempted to open my lips upon this too intereſting ſubject, than my courage failed; my heart with ſoft and fluttering timidity rebelled againſt the dictates of reaſon; a thouſand ſcruples inſtantly aroſe; I bluſhed; conſcious ſhame held faſt my tongue; the firſt word died upon my lips; my confidence vaniſhed; and I found the words, *I love*, ſo hard to be uttered, that I was forced in ſpite of myſelf to continue ſilent, and leave unattempted the too ſoftening confeſſion; while all the advantages I ſo reaſonably expected from her aſſiſtance were unable to ſurmount the weakneſs I laboured under. What a painful perplexed ſituation was this! and how hard is it for a virtuous mind to prevent that ſhame, which ought only to accompany vice, from attending the moſt laudable paſſions! The mind, enfeebled by cuſtom, is taught to regard that as a weakneſs which is it's higheſt perfection; nor is it ſtrange that the moſt honourable and decent love ſhould be accompanied with a modeſt reluctant ſhame, ſince we are taught to bluſh at being diſcovered in the practice of the nobleſt and moſt ſublime virtues.

My aunt did not ſtay long: ſoftened by her own affection, and the tenderneſs of her daughter, ſhe left us with all that ſatisfaction in her looks that could ariſe from the contemplation of the felicity of her child; when the perturbation of my mind, occaſioned by the ſtruggle between my diffidence and reaſon, inſenſibly diſperſed, and at laſt left me at leiſure calmly to ſympathiſe in the happineſs of my friends. Hope now gains the aſcendant in my mind; and the indulgence of this good mother makes me flatter myſelf with the ſame from a father, no leſs affectionately concerned for my intereſt.

With my ſincereſt reſpects to his lordſhip, I am, Madam, with all poſſible affection, yours, &c.

FELICIA.

LETTER XVII.

MADAM,

IT is not without the appearance of reaſon that you are ſurprized at the unaccountable manner in which we diſpoſe of our hearts; but if we look around us, we ſhall find cauſe to vindicate the grave, the ſedate, and tranquil Amelia, for loving a perſon of a temper ſo widely different from her own. It is not always a reſemblance of ourſelves in temper, any more than in features, that conſtitutes the ſtrongeſt attractive: on the contrary, the thoughtful mind, conſcious of it's own incapacity to render itſelf happy, is naturally charmed with one whoſe airy ſprightlineſs is beſt adapted to give it relief, and vary it's pleaſures by inſpiring the delightful relaxations of the more lively ſocial enjoyments; while the vivacious volatile temper expects the ſame ſatisfaction from the ſagacious and more ſober reflections of ſolid thought and decent prudence. Thus we frequently find that a contraſt of this kind gives a variety which adds a poignancy to their joys, while thoſe whoſe ſouls nature ſeems to have formed in the ſame mould, too often drag on a dull inſipid life, or trifle it away with a mixture of alternate levity and ſpleen. Yet, after all, it muſt be confeſſed, that however various their tempers, it is abſolutely neceſſary there ſhould be a conformity, at leaſt, of paſſion and ſentiment.

Methinks I write now with the gravity of a philoſopher; and that, in accounting for Amelia's tenderneſs for Mellifont, I have very handſomely apologized for that of your trifling friend for the grave and learned Lucius.

Yeſterday being the time we had appointed to pay Marilla's mother a viſit, my aunt, Amelia, and I, ſet out on foot, as ſoon as we had dined, after having given orders for the coach to fetch us back in the evening. The day was exceeding fine; and the air rendered cool and refreſhing by a gentle breeze, which juſt waved the yellow corn, that opening in a narrow path, gave us an eaſy and delightful paſſage; while the bearded ears hung their heavy heads ſurcharged with myriads of glittering pearls, the fruits of a haſty ſhower which, before we had ſet out, had refreſhed the earth, and embalmed the air with a fragrance infinitely more pleaſing than that which ariſes from the powdered toupée of an accompliſhed beau, or the odours which ſcent your ladyſhip's gloves. A thouſand clouds with intermingled gold and purple, of various lights and ſhades, adorned the wide, the blue expanſe, or dimmed the too ardent rays of the dazzling

zling sun; while the insatiate eye greedily surveyed the wide-stretched plenty, or the distant woods embrowned by Autumn, or glowing with a lengthened verdure of various hues. Here friendly chat and innocent gaiety kept up our spirits, deluded away the time, and helped to increase the tender joy which glowed in my bosom at every thought of my speedily seeing Lucius. I saw the farmer, to whom I had given so seasonable a relief, with honest front giving orders to his servants. My heart sprung again with a bounding joy; I found myself in the fields I had preserved in his possession, and felt more charms in the great abundance that surrounded me, from the reflection of it's contributing to the advancement of an honest, though unfortunate family, than the most rapacious miser in viewing his hoarded treasures. He perceived me; when, with an humble scrape and grateful look, he silently expressed his acknowledgments.

At last we arrived at the end of our walk; when, as Marilla had been privately acquainted the night before with our intended visit, we were sure to find Lucius at home: they both met us at the gate, accompanied by their mother, where they all with glowing extasy paid us their compliments, and conducted us into a neat and well-finished parlour. Here we took some refreshment; which being over, Amelia judging by her own heart that I should be glad of an opportunity of a separate conversation, asked me with a smile, if I was not too weary with my walk, to take a turn with her in the garden; while Lucius and Marilla, with a sparkling intelligent kind of satisfaction in their looks, offered their service to accompany us.

Here we had a most tender interview; I explained the reason of my conduct in concealing from him the addresses of Mellifont, and thanked him for the assistance he had given me in sparing me the trouble of being any longer teazed by his importunities. We then consulted how to procure my father's consent; but had come to no determination, when we were interrupted by my aunt, whom we saw coming down the alley to meet us. However, she did not discover much surprize at seeing us together without our companions, who we immediately told her were gone to gather some fruit, which indeed was the excuse they had made use of in leaving us: but we had hardly made this apology for their absence, when we perceived them returning; and my aunt telling us that she was afraid we should fatigue ourselves too much, desired we would walk in. We consented, and immediately followed her.

Sophronia, Lucius's mother, entertained me with all that ease and polite freedom which is natural to a well-bred woman; and the part she bore in the conversation sufficiently discovered her good sense, and the delicacy and justness of her sentiments, while an air of sweetness gave a grace to every thing she said. We were entertained with several subjects, without the least connection, most of which were very trifling; but at last, the clergy being mentioned, and several smart stories told of the jocose manner in which the worthy vicar of a neighbouring parish conferred the greatest benefits, we insensibly became interested in the subject. From the clergy we digressed to religion; an easy transition: when some of the errors of Christians, sanctified by the venerable name of Orthodoxy, were proved inconsistent with reason, with all our ideas of moral beauty and natural harmony; with all those engaging portraits of the Deity; with the swell of humanity which expands our bosoms, refines our ideas, and makes us partake of the divine pleasures of beneficence and conscious virtue; with the kindly impression we every where receive from a view of Nature, equally lovely in all her works, and equally conspiring to an universal happiness; and, in short, with the plainest discoveries of that revelation which we acknowledge to be divine. 'Man, the noblest part of this lower 'creation,' said Lucius, 'is sunk from 'the dignity of his being, and repre-'sented as naturally incapable of pleas-'ing, by his best actions, his kind and 'benevolent Maker. What a reflection 'on the divine Artificer! Our very vir-'tues are crimes, and the most perfect 'use of all our powers merits no other 'reward than eternal damnation! What 'a preposterous opinion, to think of 'pleasing the Creator by degrading his 'works! So far from having any moral 'sense, any in-wrought love of virtue, 'we are,' say they, 'formed with a 'thousand propensities to vice; and 'there is not a crime which ever was 'committed, but what lurks in the breast 'of every man, as he is formed by na-

'ture,

'ture, and to which he is particularly 'inclined. If this be the case, a manly 'action and a villainous one are synony-'mous terms; and to say a person be-'haves like a man, is to say, he is a 'sodomite, a murderer, a parricide; 'and what, if possible, is a greater 'contradiction still, it is to say, that he 'is to the last degree penurious and ex-'travagant; that he destroys himself by 'debauchery, and yet pines away for 'want: in short, that he acts from 'vicious principles so opposite, that they 'must necessarily destroy each other. 'Sentiments that in themselves are not 'more monstrous, than inconsistent with 'experience, and every dictate of rea-'son and common sense. But the be-'neficent Father of the universe, whose 'invariable goodness is infinite and 'boundless, has been so far from cursing 'his offspring by inspiring them with 'such baleful envenomed dispositions, 'that he has strongly connected, by the 'very frame of our minds, vice and 'cruelty with hate, shame and horror; 'virtue, with a thousand charms, a 'thousand lovely attractives. Supreme 'and unrivalled in glory, and glowing 'with a conscious sense of his own 'matchless, unfading felicity, he creates 'to communicate happiness, and forms 'a wonderous scale of beings, widely 'to extend the glorious emanations of 'his goodness. He makes it their duty 'to be happy; and the glory of each in-'dividual, like him, to diffuse happiness 'around him. He places them in a 'state of trial, with every tender social 'affection in their hearts, to struggle 'with each selfish thought, and gives a 'ray of his wisdom to direct in what 'manner to exercise the particular exer-'tions of these intendering dispositions. 'What a subject for gratitude; for the 'most devout, the most humble and 'elevated piety! This is the religion of 'Nature; the generous, the friendly 'religion of the Bible: that one invari-'able religion, which will ever be a 'law to every species of moral and ac-'countable beings, from men up to the 'highest order of celestial spirits.'

'Nor can there be a religion,' I could not help interrupting, 'that gives us 'more exalted sentiments of the Deity. 'What surprizing munificence! The no-'blest pleasures that can swell our minds, 'are those which accompany the practice 'of virtue; and yet, exquisite as these 'delights are, they are only a prelude 'to diviner raptures; they refine the soul, 'and fit us for that state of being 'where our joys shall be unmixed with 'care, and uninterrupted by the strug-'gle of contending passions; where 'friendship and gratitude shall be refined 'into the purest extasies, and every so-'cial affection attune the soul into the 'most perfect harmony! Delightful 'thought! how lovely is the Deity, 'and how worthy of our highest esteem 'and veneration!'

You would have smiled, my dear friend, had you seen the delight Lucius expressed in his countenance at finding my sentiments so agreeable to his own: his eyes, while I was speaking, kindled with unusual briskness; and tempered the tender softness of his glances with an air of the highest satisfaction.

'But these enthusiasts,' replied my aunt, 'who from an affectation of hu-'mility have treated their own species 'with such insolent reproach, have not 'had more regard to the most sacred ob-'ligations. Can we hear without asto-'nishment the charming ties of virtue 'blasphemed? the foundation of all 'publick and private happiness treated 'with contempt? Strange indeed, that 'men should be so insensible of the 'striking graces of a virtuous charac-'ter! that that sacred law, to which the 'Deity himself pays obedience, should 'be loaded with the vilest reproach even 'from the pulpit! A good-natured 'person must feel all the humanity of 'his bosom rise with indignation at the 'impious profanation.'

'However surprizing this may ap-'pear,' replied Sophronia, 'yet our 'wonder will in a great measure vanish, 'if we consider that the same persons 'discard the use of reason from religion; 'for while this is the case, nothing can 'be too absurd to be embraced: nay, 'absurdity itself,' continued she, 'has 'been made a mark of truth; and peo-'ple have stretched their faith so far as 'to give their assent to what they them-'selves acknowledged to be impossible. 'What could the utmost barbarism of 'ignorance do more? The Deity, all 'lovely as he is, glowing with every 'virtue, and surrounded with the daz-'zling radiance of a heavenly smile, is 'represented as stern and inexorable, 'weak and partial, as pleased with idle 'compliments, empty praises, and little

'tricks

'tricks of devotion; as supreme in fell 'revenge, with relentless malevolence, 'consigning irretrievably, before the 'world began, ninety-nine of every 'hundred of his future offspring to 'eternal horrors, and the utmost ex-'treme of agonizing torture; while they, 'the destined few, happy favourites! 'triumph in his mercy, and extol this 'superlative instance of his paternal good-'ness and kind partiality.'—'Horrid 'thought!' cried Lucius; 'what a ty-'rant! what a monster! what a devil! 'Can we form an idea of a being more 'tremendously terrible? A harpy, or 'Cerberian monster, with more enve-'nomed rancour? This is the height of 'dæmonism: but let the poor heathen 'howl and tremble before his pagod; 'let the barbarian pollute with human 'blood the altars of his idol; let the ig-'norant mandarin, the bigotted der-'vise, or Romish zealot, wound and 'torment themselves to please a being 'who has no existence in nature; or the 'falsely reformed Christian strive to out-'vie the Pagan in the frantick reveries 'of his enthusiasm; virtue and har-'mony will still be the same; and the 'Almighty, unpolluted by their praises, 'will look with pity on the errors of his 'children; they are all the objects of his impartial regard, and equally intitled 'to his favour: for, as Mr. Hill justly 'observes—

"Briton and Russian differ but in name;
"In Nature's sense all nations are the
'same."

'Strange absurdity!' said I, 'that 'religion should be brought to overturn 'all the obligations of religion! for it 'is incredible that any revelation should 'be thought to be true, which supposes 'the author of it false, malevolent, and 'cruel. But while our priests declaim 'against morality, it is no great wonder 'that it should be despised by the laity: 'such gloomy representations of reli-'gion, such contemptible discourses of 'virtue, must needs corrupt the minds 'of the multitude, and fix the strongest 'prejudices against every thing sacred; 'make our duty looked upon as a bur-'then; and the most pleasing exercises 'of grateful piety regarded as an irk-'some drudgery.'

Our conversation was here interrupted by a servant, who entering with a letter, delivered it to my aunt, at the same time telling her, that as it had been left for her just before our coachman set out, he thought proper to bring it with him. She received it with an air of joy; when breaking it open, and casting her eyes at the bottom, she told me it came from my father; and a minute after added, with a smile and a tone of surprize, that he was preparing to take a journey to see me. What a sudden confusion did this unexpected news give me! The joy that I was ready to receive, was suspended by the shock of a rising apprehension, that something extraordinary was the cause of this journey. 'Sure,' said I to myself, 'he cannot be acquainted 'with our mutual passion!' What an alarm did this doubt give me! my heart trembled with a very painful disorder; and it now flutters in the same uneasy manner, while I acquaint you that I dread to see him. But what have I done, that I should be afraid of seeing my father's face? O my dear Lucius! to be deprived of the hopes of living with thee—to see thee no more! Oh! I cannot bear to think of it. It was then impossible to prevent my apprehensions from making some alteration in my countenance. I endeavoured to conceal them under a look of surprize; but, in spite of myself, that surprize had some traces of uneasiness. I struggled with myself in vain; my aunt perceived it; I saw she did, and that increased my disorder; but she had too much good-nature to increase it still more, by seeming to take notice of it. Lucius too had his eyes fixed upon mine, while I perceived that he every moment changed colour, and appeared not less alarmed than myself. However, it was now time to retire, and I was soon mistress enough of myself to take my leave of these dear friends with a tolerable good grace.

What will be the subject of my next letter I cannot guess; my father's presence will undoubtedly make a considerable alteration in my affairs; and I am now in the utmost suspence, yet dread to know the reason of his journey. Dear Madam, if you can inform me what I ought to think of it, let me hear from you by the next post.

With my sincerest respects to his lordship, I am, dear Madam, yours, &c.

FELICIA.

LETTER XVIII.

OH, MADAM!

I HAVE ſtrange things to tell you! My father arrived this morning, and has thrown me into ſuch confuſion, that I am hardly able to write to you. I was looking out of my window, bewildered with a mazy crowd of uſeleſs reflections, and had ſtood for ſome time without motion, when I was rouzed from this ſtupid ſituation of mind by a coach and ſix, which drove in a cloud of duſt at a great rate towards our houſe, attended by ſeveral ſervants. I did not ſee them till they were near. They alighted at the gate, and almoſt in the ſame moment I heard my father's voice. Forgetful of my tears, every care was in an inſtant ſwallowed up by duty: my heart glowed with affection. 'It is my 'father! it is my father!' I cried aloud. He lifted up his eyes and ſaw me, when ſtarting from the window, I ran down ſtairs with the utmoſt eagerneſs to embrace him. I met him in the hall. I flew into his arms; when turning from me to avoid my embrace, he deſired me coldly to walk in; but at the ſame time gave a ſigh, and fixed upon me a look which diſcovered how much he ſuffered by this reſtraint. Ah, Madam! you cannot conceive what a ſhock this behaviour gave me. I burſt into tears, and went into the parlour, followed by Amelia.

'Tell me, my dear couſin,' ſaid I, as ſoon as I could ſpeak, 'tell me what 'I ſhall do. How muſt I ſupport my 'father's anger? Do you think now, I 'deſerve to be treated in this manner? 'I can't bear to think of offending him. 'I know it is hard for him to uſe me 'unkindly. But ſure he has no cauſe 'to give me ſuch a cold reception. He 'has heard of my loving Lucius; but 'is that ſuch a crime? Alas! I muſt 'be unhappy, and Lucius muſt be ſo 'too!'

I was interrupted in this bitter complaint, which was intermingled with ſighs and tears, by hearing my father at the door, who entered the room juſt as Amelia was going to endeavour to comfort me. She ſat near me, with her looks fixed upon mine. He ſaw us both in a moving ſituation; and when we lifted up our eyes to his, the mutual tears that for a moment almoſt ſtopped our ſight, trickled down our cheeks, and ſeemed to make a ſtrong impreſſion on his countenance. When turning to my aunt, who ſtood behind him at the door, he told her, he deſired to be a few minutes alone with me. At this Amelia aroſe, and after preſſing my hand with the utmoſt tenderneſs, retired with my aunt.

My father, as if he knew not how to behave, and perhaps wanting time to compoſe his mind, in order to treat me with a ſternneſs ſuitable to the ſubject of his complaint, and which, I dare ſay, he had need of all his reſolution to ſupport, took a few turns about the room, with the appearance of the utmoſt diſorder; but at laſt growing more compoſed, he faſtened the door, and ſeated himſelf by me, giving me a fixed look, which had a mixture of anger and ſenſibility; while I held down my head, drowned in tears, and almoſt ſtifled with my ſighs; and indeed I was ſo intimidated by his preſence, that I hardly durſt lift up a glance, to obſerve his countenance. My heart ached in the moſt painful manner, and ſeemed to ſtruggle to vent it's complaints. At laſt ſeeming to recollect myſelf—'Feli-'cia, it is with ſhame,' ſaid he, in a grave tone, 'that I ſee you the diſgrace 'of my family. Fooliſh girl! what 'could induce you to forfeit your ho-'nour? My fondneſs made me flatter 'myſelf with abundance of pleaſing 'hopes. I have conſidered you as my 'only child, as the picture of your dear 'mother, and you muſt have been ſen-'ſible that my whole happineſs was 'bound up in yours. What, then, un-'grateful creature! could induce you to 'throw off my authority, and to ſuffer 'yourſelf to be ſeduced by an artful, de-'ſigning villain? Alas! is this the 'fruit of that virtue and good ſenſe 'in which I have prided myſelf? Is this 'the effect of that delicacy and inno-'cent wit, in which I weakly fancied 'that you reſembled your dear mother? 'this the reward of all my tender 'cares and pleaſing hopes? But you 'ſhall know that a father's reſentment 'is to be feared. It is ſtill in my power 'to puniſh you; and I aſſure you, the raſ-'cal that has corrupted your innocence, 'and made me an unhappy parent, 'ſhall feel the effects of my rage.'

How was it poſſible, Madam, for me to ſupport ſuch reproaches from a father, whom

whom I had never injured even in thought? To hear Lucius, my dear Lucius, reproached in the coarſeſt epithets! to hear him charged with ſeducing me! to be thought ungrateful! to be regarded as a monſter, who had no ſenſe of honour and duty! my heart roſe with indignation—I could not bear theſe unjuſt reflections. But in the ſame moment, obſerving the agitations of my father's countenance, and reflecting upon what he now ſuffered for me, I diſſolved in affection, and with a precipitation inſpired by a ſudden impulſe of ſoul, threw myſelf at his feet. 'Hear me, 'Sir, hear me,' cried I, with a reſolution inſpired by my innocence, while my eagerneſs to vindicate myſelf filled me with an impatience that made me inſtantly loſe ſight of all that diffidence and reſtraint which had before kept me ſilent; 'let me know of what I am ac-'cuſed—in what reſpect I have for-'feited my honour? How have I of-'fended you? Tell me, dear father—'tell me in what inſtance I have abuſed 'your goodneſs?'—'Can you aſk *me* 'that queſtion?' returned he in an inexorable tone; 'have I not ſufficient rea-'ſon to be offended? There, read that,' cried he, 'and bluſh to think that you 'dare preſume to impoſe upon me by an 'air of innocence; I know the world 'too well to ſuffer myſelf to be deceived 'by theſe artifices. You will there 'find, that however ſecretly you have 'managed your intrigues, I have been 'but too well acquainted with them.'

Here throwing me a letter, and ariſing haſtily, he walked to the door with an air that ſhewed him not in the leaſt ſoftened at the ſimplicity of my behaviour; when ſtopping ſhort, as if blaming himſelf for leaving me on the floor, he returned with equal ſpeed to help me up. But I aroſe before he came to me; when ſnatching up the letter—'I thought, 'Sir,' cried I, in a reſolute tone, 'that 'I ſhould never be ſo unhappy as to be 'refuſed to be heard by my father; but 'however unkindly you are now pleaſed 'to treat me, it ſhall never make me 'forget my duty.' At this I opened the letter, and he went out of the room. In a few minutes I no longer wondered at his treatment; my whole reſentment was levelled at the wicked author of thoſe malicious lines; and I could not help acquitting my father, and thinking his conduct highly reaſonable, on a ſuppoſition that he believed thoſe vile aſperſions. You yourſelf, Madam, ſhall ſee the letter, that you may judge how groſsly I have been abuſed; and I now tranſcribe it with the utmoſt exactneſs.

'SIR,

'THO i am intyrly unnown to you 'my regard for your onner makes 'me lay before you an afare in wich you 'are partikularly conſarnd tho i muſt 'confeſs i have a uaſt deal of reluktans 'at communikatin the ſecret intreges of 'miſs feliſia for wom I haue a grate af-'feciſhon but you will no all ſooner or 'later i am uery ſorry to tell you that 'unnown to her aunt ſhe kepes com-'pany with a yung gentleman of little 'fortin wen compard with hers but it 'wud give you too much conſarn to ſay 'that her uarty is intirely loſt i hope it 'is not quite ſo bad yet howiuar he has 'don her a ſtill grater ingury by kor-'ruptin her mynd god nos nothing but 'my regard for her cud make me ſend 'you this afliktive neus euery word of 'wich I aſhur you upon my onner is 'ſtrictly treu i wud aduiſe you to ſend 'for her up to toun as priuatly as poſi-'ble her ant loves her as euery body dus 'that nos her and it wud be a ſad aflik-'ſhon to the gud lady to find that ſhe 'ſhud behave ſo badly while under her 'care and as this wud be a conſarn that 'cud do her no gud it wud be better 'not to let her no it i have won more 'thing to ad and that is that however 'gilty you find her you wud treat her 'gently this my affekſhon for her makes 'me beg of you remember ſhe is your 'child ſo concluds your and feliſias ſin-'cere tho' unnown friend.

'P. S. the yung mans father is a 'doun rite lybertin and not wurth a 'graut.'

I am ſure, Madam, your generous concern for my happineſs makes you now feel much the ſame riſings of indignation at reading the vile inſinuations of this ridiculous letter that I did, and therefore I need not particularly deſcribe the various pangs of working antipathy it occaſioned in my boſom What groſs, what infamous reflections! But a heart filled with conſcious innocence is the beſt ſupport againſt ſlander. What little reaſon have we to boaſt of the ſuperior advantages of education, when perſons

ſons of the meaneſt attainments can deſtroy our peace, and make ſuch bitter inroads on our happineſs! The ſtupidity and ill-ſpelling of the letter I was ſenſible could not give my father the leaſt reaſon to ſuſpect the ſincerity of the writer, ſince a perſon of the meaneſt ſenſe and moſt illiberal education is equally as good a judge of facts as thoſe who are poſſeſſed of the moſt amiable accompliſhments. And indeed, ſo far from this being an objection, it muſt appear to him as a circumſtance that confirmed the hateful inſinuations it contained; ſince he would naturally ſuppoſe, that a perſon who appeared ſo much beneath me, could have no very particular acquaintance with me, and conſequently could have no intereſt in view in attempting to deceive him. Theſe were ſome of the firſt reflections I made on this part of my misfortunes. 'But who is the 'writer?' ſaid I to myſelf; 'this I am par-'ticularly intereſted to know, ſince it is of 'the greateſt importance towards clear-'ing my injured innocence, and regain-'ing my father's eſteem.' At this I fixed my eyes again upon the letter, and fancied it was a woman's hand, while the falſe orthography convinced me that my conjecture was well founded. But then, who had I offended? 'There are none,' ſaid I, 'that I have ſeen here, that I dare 'fix ſuch a baſe ſuſpicion upon; beſides, 'could malice alone ſeek to ruin me, 'without ſome deep-laid ſcheme of 'rankling ſelfiſhneſs? But whoſe happineſs do I oppoſe? I know nobody 'to whoſe felicity I would not contribute. What muſt I think? How can 'I clear myſelf, without being able to 'find out the wicked author of this 'heavy misfortune?'

Thus, Madam, I reaſoned then, and thus I reaſon ſtill; while every reflection, inſtead of giving me the leaſt light into this dark affair, wraps it in a ſtill deeper obſcurity. But, alas! had the whole been as great a falſhood as that part which charges the virtuous Lucius and me with guilt, I ſhould have leſs to fear. My aunt is ignorant of our tender paſſion; I have ſeen him without her knowledge; encouraged his addreſſes without my father's permiſſion; and ſtill love that worthy ſon of an unworthy father, the amiable ſon of an abandoned libertine. How can I confeſs this, without making him ſuſpect that the perſon to whom he owes this information is too well acquainted with my weakneſs to be miſtaken in the leaſt particular? The truth of one circumſtance will give credit to the reſt, and give all too great an air of truth; while my father's opinion that Lucius is the author of my ruin, will root ſo deep a prejudice againſt him, that he will be deaf to all that can be ſaid in his favour, and hardly ever be brought to hear him vindicated with patience.

All theſe reflections paſſed through my mind with the utmoſt precipitation; for, impatient to find ſomething to fix upon that might lead me out of this labyrinth, and teach me how to calm my father's anger, I in an inſtant collected every ſcattered thought, and ſought all around me for ſome pleaſing friendly hope on which I might ſupport my ſpirits, ready to ſink under my father's diſpleaſure: but my ſoul could glance it's eye upon no comfort except it's innocence; and as often as that occurred to my mind, there beamed through it a ray of peace, which preſerved me from ſinking under this heavy load of difficulties. Amidſt theſe various agitations, my thoughts frequently returned to my father, to the almoſt infinite inſtances I have received of his goodneſs. Intendering thoughts! delightful ideas! though now attended with bitterneſs—a ſoothing bitterneſs, that melted my ſoul, and filled my eyes again with freſh flowing tears. But here again my innocence, ſweeteſt comfort of the diſtreſſed! returned again, and made me reflect that I was ſtill as worthy of his indulgent regards as ever. Happy, delightful thought! O virtue! thou nobleſt ſource of fortitude, thou ſweeteſt ſupport of the human mind, how unſpeakable is thy value, and how much more than wretched is the mind that wants thy aids!

Employed in this manner, I ſpent a conſiderable time alone in the parlour, expecting every moment my father's return; for which, however, I was not yet prepared; when at laſt a ſervant came to tell me that dinner was upon table. I had hitherto been too deeply engaged to think of dining, and was therefore unprovided with an excuſe to prevent it, though, in the ſituation I was in, it was natural to feel a great deal of reluctance againſt ſitting at the ſame table with my father; and beſides, the emotions I had ſuffered had entirely taken away my appetite. My mind, yet too diſturbed for company,

company, made me look upon solitude as a relief; I therefore sent word that I was indisposed, and desired to be excused; but the next moment, considering that it would appear very singular to the family, and perhaps set the servants upon searching for the reason of my behaviour, if I alone should be absent from the table at my father's coming, and that nothing could appear to them sufficient to excuse my refusal; I hastily wiped my eyes, and arming myself with all the courage I could collect, made haste into the dining-room, in order to overtake the servant before he had delivered his message.

I took my seat with the rest, with an air as calm as possible, though it is not to be supposed that my countenance could be entirely divested of every trace of uneasiness. My father had his eyes continually fixed upon me with an earnestness that alternately expressed his anger and pity, while I endeavoured to support his looks with an easy humble confidence. My aunt and Amelia regarded us both with a silent kind of admiration, and I dare say there never was an elegant entertainment passed over with fewer words. As soon as the dessert was taken away, I drank my duty to my father: this was the first syllable that I had spoken; and though I had not eat a mouthful, neither my aunt nor cousin had pressed me to it. They saw my disorder, and did not question my having cause for uneasiness, since my father appeared no more at ease than I. I drank, I say, my duty to my father; but my heart was too full to suffer me to speak it plainly: these words trembled on my quivering lips; for my heart so strongly felt the force of duty, that it would speak it too; it struggled to speak it; my softness would not be restrained; a gush of filial piety started into my eyes; and the moment I lifted up my hand, hardly knowing what I did, the tears started, and fell into the glass: I then set it down untouched. At this circumstance my father seemed greatly affected. My aunt, with tears in her eyes, filled me another glass; when looking at her, while the rising swell again almost intercepted my sight—'You wonder, Ma-'dam,' cried I, 'at the manner in 'which I welcome my father.' Here she interrupted me, by ordering the servant that was in waiting to retire; and he being gone, I continued—'And is 'it not a thing to be wondered at? I 'have not seen my father before these 'six months; that dear father, whose 'tenderness for me has been too great 'to be expressed: but, alas! his mind is 'tainted with the foulest suspicions. O 'help me to vindicate my honour, and 'to find out the monstrous author of 'these infamous lyes! I am sure he 'will be glad to find me innocent; I 'know he will.'

Here I threw the letter upon the table; and, unable to retain any longer the impetuous glut of sorrow that now arose too high to be concealed, I drew out my handkerchief, and hanging down my head, gave free scope to my tears. My grief would not now admit of restraint, I therefore neither stifled my sighs nor groans; I sobbed aloud, and every one in the company bore a part in this melancholy entertainment; they all sympathized with me, and wept without reserve; even my father could not help joining with the rest. I lifted up my eyes, swimming in tears, and saw some big drops roll down his awful face; when rising hastily, as if he feared being softened too much to be able to retain his rigour, or dreading that he should lose his judgment in his affection, went out of the room with a countenance that expressed more tenderness than austerity.

As soon as he was gone, my aunt, taking me by the hand, and laying down the letter—'I have been much surprized,' said she, wiping her eyes, 'at my bro-'ther's behaviour, and have in vain en-'deavoured to find out the cause of it; 'he would give me no reason for treat-'ing you as he has done, but you have 'discovered the mystery. He has been 'informed of your passion for Lucius: 'and don't you really love him? I have 'for some time suspected it. Come, 'my dear, be sincere: there is no crime 'in loving a man of his character. You 'need not tell me that you are innocent 'of what is here laid to your charge; 'I am satisfied that you are so; and 'have too good an opinion of you both, 'to entertain the least suspicion injurious 'to his honour or yours; you are both 'virtuous, and both worthy of my bro-'ther's esteem.'—'Ah, Madam!' cried I, with a resolution inspired by my grief, 'will you forgive my injuring your 'goodness by concealing it from you? 'This is kind indeed! I do love him, 'tenderly love him, love him even more

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'than myself; but indeed, Madam, our 'mutual passion has been always regu-'lated by the strictest virtue; it is an 'innocent passion; and I assure you, 'that he loves me too well to propose 'any step that would disoblige my fa-'ther; nor would he, great as his love is, 'accept of my hand without his con-'sent, who alone has a right to dispose 'of me. This I know to be true; he 'has told me so himself, while I have 'rejoiced in his virtue, and considered it 'as a most convincing instance of the 'purity and sublimity of his soul.'

'I don't question it, my dear,' returned she, pressing my hand. 'But 'who is the author of this malicious let-'ter? I should be glad to be informed 'of that. But Lucius may possibly be 'able to give us some light; I will write 'to him to-night, and inclose this in it: 'mean-while, I will take upon me to clear 'up your virtue, and to give my bro-'ther better sentiments of this amiable 'young man. But it is fit he should 'appear himself: let him be his own 'advocate; he will plead the cause of 'his own heart with prevailing elo-'quence.'—'Dear Madam,' cried I, embracing her, 'is it possible that you 'can be so very good! Do you indeed 'think we shall be able to remove the in-'vidious impressions that have been 'made upon my father's mind? O how 'happy shall I think myself, if I can 'but regain his affection! for the un-'easiness he suffers on my account is 'more painful to me than all the effects 'of his displeasure.' My aunt embraced me in her turn, and endeavoured to recover my spirits by her caresses; and, in short, having called for a pen and ink, wrote in the following terms to my dear Lucius—

'SIR,

'BY my brother's arrival this morn-'ing, I find that you and Feli-'cia have been much injured; but, to 'remove the pain this news may give 'you, I offer my best endeavours to 'undeceive him; nor shall my utmost 'efforts be wanting to do you justice, 'by convincing him that you have a 'mind that scorns to be guilty of what 'is laid to your charge in the inclosed 'libel. Let it be your care to find out 'the wicked author, and let us see you 'as soon as possible. Yours, &c.

* * * *.

This note, I say, was wrote in the wrapper, sealed up, and sent away by a servant, who had orders to deliver it into his own hand. You see now, Madam, the situation of my affairs; I am upon a crisis which must determine my future happiness or misery. It is true, the satisfaction I have received from my aunt's goodness is too great to be expressed; she has given me hopes which counterbalance my fears; and, in the midst of all my uneasiness, my gratitude and affection for her have some charms, some engaging sweets, which will make themselves felt: but yet, while my father is so offended, I must have a claim to your pity; and therefore, with the greatest propriety, subscribe myself, your ladyship's most unhappy servant,

FELICIA.

LETTER XIX.

BY the last post, Madam, I gave you an account of my father's arrival, and of the dreadful turn his presence made in my affairs; and I imagine that, filled with a friendly impatience, you long to hear whether I have yet so far vindicated my honour as to recover his esteem, or whether I am still oppressed with the same uneasiness I then laboured under. I will therefore make haste to gratify your curiosity, and repeat my letters, without waiting the return of the post for an answer; but did you but know how much I need your advice and consolation, you would be as expeditious in writing as I am.

My dear afflicted father, I told you, unable to withstand his natural affection, and resolving to be guided only by the cool dictates of his judgment, was constrained, in order to keep a mastery over his passions, to retire for some time, to collect his spirits; while I took advantage of his absence to write to you my last melancholy epistle, which took me up the whole afternoon, having transcribed the ridiculous letter I sent you a copy of while my aunt was writing to Lucius.

In the evening, this good lady had the precaution to order the servants not to enter the room, lest they should be a witness of any expressions that might shock my delicacy for them to hear: a behaviour that shewed at once her prudence

dence and regard for my reputation. Even at supper a dumb-waiter supplied the place of an attendant, so that we were entirely at liberty to enter without restraint upon the injustice of my father's suspicions; nor could my aunt let slip this first opportunity of assuring him, that, notwithstanding the malicious letter which had given him so much uneasiness, she still retained the highest opinion of my virtue and discretion. 'But, 'to clear Felicia's innocence,' said she, 'it is necessary that we should try to find 'out the wicked writer; but as this 'will probably require time, you must 'endeavour mean while to divest your-'self of prejudices, which may prevent 'your discovering the truth. It is not 'whether my niece has placed her affec-'tions upon a person of a fortune some-'thing inferior to hers that we are now 'to enquire after, but whether it is upon 'an unworthy object; whether she has 'violated her regard for virtue, behaved 'in any instance inconsistent with a de-'cent modesty, or had any thoughts of 'disposing of herself without your con-'sent. In short, it is your Felicia's ho-'nour and duty that we are to vindi-'cate; and I don't doubt but we shall 'be able to do it to the satisfaction of 'any disinterested person.'—'What, 'then,' returned he, 'would you insi-'nuate that there is no crime in placing 'her affections upon a man beneath 'her? A very pretty story truly! If she 'has no more regard for my authority 'than privately to favour the addresses 'of a worthless fellow, what ought I 'to think of her? Is this any instance ei-'ther of her duty or modesty? No, no— 'I am not fit to be consulted—the old 'fool, her father, would be too scrupu-'lous; he would perhaps consult his 'daughter's honour to the prejudice of 'her inclinations; and it would be time 'enough to seek his consent when it 'will be of no service to him to refuse 'it.' Severe as these words were, the manner of his uttering them added a double sharpness; they touched me in a tender part, and penetrated my very soul. What could I do, then, but burst into tears; into bitter tears, that arose from an agony too painful to be endured? These were all the answer that I could make him; only, as I rose to go to bed, I sobbed out—'Indeed, Sir, your su-'spicions go to my very heart; but it is 'my satisfaction that I don't deserve 'them. Indeed I have never injured you, 'even in thought.'

You will readily believe that I was too much indisposed to taste the refreshing sweets of sleep. I was no sooner laid down, than I began to give way to a whole crowd of painful reflections. I considered myself as the most unhappy creature upon earth, and as worthy of the pity of the meanest peasant. 'My 'father,' said I to myself, 'looks upon 'me with shame! my dear, my tender 'father, hardens his heart against me! 'I have lost his esteem, lost his affec-'tion. Had I sacrificed my passion for 'Lucius to him, I might have made a 'merit of my obedience, and the plea-'sure he would have received from the 'reflection of my duty would have been 'some recompence for the violence I 'should have done myself. But I have 'now lost both my father and my lover. 'What a shock to nature! what a vio-'lence to love! Like a wretch the most 'desolate and forlorn, I find myself de-'prived of every comfort, of every com-'fort except my innocence. What a 'group of miseries has this day pro-'duced! When filled with joy at my 'father's presence, while nature, strug-'gling in my bosom, made me fly to 'his arms, longing to embrace him, 'and eager to welcome him upon his 'arrival; to turn away from me with 'disdain, to treat me as a guilty crimi-'nal, as the disgrace of his family! O 'my heart! how have I been able to 'sustain the shock! What would I 'not give to find out the author of all 'my troubles!—O, my dear Lucius, 'didst thou but know the agony, the 'distraction of my soul at this moment, 'how nearly would thy despair resem-'ble mine! Alas! thou wilt know it 'too soon! I shall never be thine! I 'must bid adieu to all the pleasing pro-'spects of happiness; they are vanished, 'and I shall be miserable!—O my God! 'pity my distress, and vindicate the 'cause of my injured innocence! Thou 'art still my friend; and to thee I can 'appeal as a witness of the purity of 'my passion, of the sincerity of my du-'ty, and the integrity of my heart. I 'must, I will confide in thy goodness.'

In reflections like these I spent the greatest part of the night, while sleep seemed to fly from my heavy eye-lids, parched up, and drained of every tear; nor was it till my usual time of rising,

rising, that, composed a little by some pious thoughts, I fell into a slumber, in which I continued till noon. I then arose, extremely indisposed with a violent pain in my head; when Amelia, thinking the air, which then blew with a pleasing freshness, might give me some relief, engaged me to take a turn in the fields. But I shall omit the conversation which passed between us, which indeed was as gloomy as possible. The thoughts of her own happiness, so sincere is her affection, could not prevent her bearing an engaging part in my afflictions; and though the day is fixed for her union with Mellifont, she seemed to sympathize in my griefs with as real a sorrow as if her heart likewise was devoid of all joy.

Upon my return I found myself much more disordered than when I went out; and therefore, by my aunt's advice, had a light dinner provided for me, and brought into my chamber, where I dined with Amelia; and that being over, was persuaded to try if sleep would give me any relief; and indeed, after an hour's repose, found the pain in my head much abated. I then went down stairs; and enquiring for my aunt, was told that she was in the parlour with my father, and Prudilla, who had just come to pay us a visit. I hesitated at first to consider whether I should join them or not; but considering that to avoid my father's presence would only encrease his opinion of my guilt, I resolved, in spite of my reluctance, to bear a part in the conversation, or at least to make one of the company.

As soon as I entered the parlour, I could not help taking notice of Prudilla's extraordinary complaisance; which was the more remarkable, as she had lately treated me, whenever I chanced to see her, with a reserved coldness; that made me fancy I had offended her; but now she oppressed me with her caresses, and seemed to strive to outdo herself by the excess of her complaisance. 'My dear,' said she, after enquiring my health, 'I am extremely sorry to see you 'so much out of order. Really you are 'more indisposed than you are willing 'to think yourself. I am afraid our 'country air don't agree with you. 'Don't you think so too, my dear? I 'think you feel a little feverish; God 'forbid a relapse! You are not yet re-'covered of a fever, that had like to 'have proved mortal.'—'I thank you, 'Madam, for your concern for my 'health,' returned I; 'but indeed, I 'have no apprehensions of that kind. 'Mine is only a slight indisposition; a 'pain in my head and lowness of spirits, 'which I hope will soon be removed: 'I am pretty subject to these disorders.' —'You have, I think, a very delicate 'constitution,' she replied; 'but even 'that is a great mercy, when it has 'such a happy effect as I observe it to 'have in you. For a person so young, 'to have a mind fixed upon a better 'world! to give such early proofs of 'your being one of the elect!—Really, 'Sir,' continued she, 'you are a very 'happy man in being blessed with a 'daughter who has so much grace and 'piety. Every body here is charmed 'with her behaviour, and I don't think 'there is a person living that can give 'her an ill word.'

My father here shook his head, and gave a sigh, and at the same time smiled with an air that seemed to thank her for her good opinion of me. My aunt smiled too, but with this difference, that her looks did not express the least degree of gratitude; for the smile which in my father's countenance discovered a secret pleasure, impressed only upon hers a satyrical cast. She knew Prudilla; my father was entirely ignorant of her character; and though she could not, as she afterwards told me, dive into her motive for giving me such devout panegyricks, yet she could not help thinking there must be something at the bottom of all this that she ought to discover. She shrugged up her shoulders with an air of distrust; her eyes ran over each of our faces, as if she sought to know, by the traces she found there, whether our thoughts were conformable to her own. Mean while Amelia, who sat next me, jogged me with her elbow, and looking in my face, bit her lips, and seemed to say—'Observe—what egregious flat-'tery!'

'I am glad,' said my father, after a moment's hesitation, 'to hear so good an 'account of my daughter: but the opi-'nions of our friends are not always the 'most just; they are blind to our foibles; 'and those few perfections we have, 'they are so complaisant as to magnify 'much above the truth. But did you 'never, Madam,' continued he, 'hear

'the

'the leaſt reflection upon Felicia's cha-
'racter?'—'No, Sir, upon my word,
'not a ſyllable, I aſſure you,' ſaid ſhe,
with the utmoſt earneſtneſs; 'there is
'not a perſon living that can give her
'an ill word. She is ſo much beloved,
'that if the conſideration of her health,
'or any other reaſon, ſhould engage you
'to take her with you to town, every
'body that knows her would be ex-
'tremely afflicted. But if her health
'makes it neceſſary, it would be an in-
'jury to her to deſire her ſtay; how-
'ever, we ſhould be extremely ſorry to
'loſe her agreeable, edifying company.'
—'I don't doubt it,' returned my aunt;
'but do you talk of removing her from
'the fragrant breezes of the country to
'the ſmoke of London, for the ſake of
'her health? The doctors are here all
'againſt you; in my opinion, Felicia is
'much better where ſhe is.'—'Nay,'
rejoined my father, 'I have no objection
'to the place. This houſe ſtands in a
'very delightful ſituation; and the bloom
'upon Amelia's countenance is to me a
'ſufficient proof of the purity of the air.'
—'I ſhall not diſpute the point with
'you,' returned Prudilla; 'all conſti-
'tutions, you know, are not alike; and,
'for my part, I am ſo much convinced
'that London would agree better with
'Miſs Felicia, that I could conſent to
'loſe her company for the advantage ſhe
'would receive from it in recovering a
'more perfect ſtate of health. Don't
'you think, Miſs Felicia,' ſaid ſhe in a
fawning tone, 'I ſhould make a con-
'ſiderable ſacrifice in foregoing the
'pleaſure of your converſation purely
'for your advantage? But my good
'friends here don't ſeem to be of my
'opinion. What do you think of it? you
'are the beſt judge; were you not
'ſtronger, more briſk and lively, when
'you lived in town, than you have been
'ſince? I think I heard you ſay you
'were.'—'No, Madam, I never ſaid
'any ſuch thing,' replied I, in a peeviſh
tone, ſurprized at what could be the
reaſon of her deſiring me to return to
London. 'Did not you? I really
'thought you did,' returned ſhe again:
'I am glad to find I was miſtaken; for
'indeed, I deſire nothing more than to
'be bleſſed with the continuance of your
'improving converſation. I was ſay-
't'other day, to a certain lady of my
'acquaintance, that it would be a great
'misfortune to us all to loſe you; "for
"poſitively," ſaid I, "a young lady of
"ſuch a holy and virtuous life is very
"hard to be met with." She was of
'my opinion; and though I don't love
'to praiſe people to their faces, I cannot
'help ſaying, that we talked I don't
'know how long on your piety.'

But I weary both you, Madam, and myſelf, with relating tattle of no conſequence. Hitherto every thing went on ſmoothly. Prudilla had attempted to perſuade my father to take me with him to town; but for what reaſon I could not then imagine: her arguments, however, proved unſucceſsful; when ſeeing me diſcover ſome marks of uneaſineſs, ſhe tried again to cajole me with the moſt ridiculous kind of flattery, which was the leſs inſupportable, as it employed my father's thoughts, and prevented him from entering upon a more painful ſubject. All this while, every thing had the air of myſtery; but her dark deſigns were ſoon to be laid open, when the very praiſes ſhe ſo liberally beſtowed upon me were to turn to her own confuſion. I ſhould have told you, that the ſervant I mentioned in my laſt to have been ſent to Lucius, with orders to deliver the letter, which has been the cauſe of all my ſufferings, into his hand, returned without an anſwer, he not being at home: he was therefore ſent again yeſterday at noon, and returning about three hours after, my aunt was called out to ſpeak to him, juſt at the time when Prudilla was in the midſt of her devoutly fulſome panegyricks, in which I let her proceed without interruption. My aunt's ſtay was very ſhort, for ſhe returned in two minutes after ſhe left us, with a countenance inflamed with anger; her eyes ſparkled with reſentment, and every geſture expreſſed a rage too violent to be reſtrained; when ſitting down for a few minutes, to recover herſelf, ſhe peruſed a letter ſhe had in her hand, while we all kept ſilence, and, big with expectation, ſeemed to wait for the diſcovery of ſome important ſecret. For my part, I knew not what to think; I was unacquainted with the ſervant's being ſent this laſt time to Lucius, for he was diſpatched to him while I was in my chamber. 'Tis true, as I had nothing to reproach myſelf with, I had no reaſon to fear my aunt's reproaches; but yet, as I had already been greatly injured, I could not help dreading ſome farther practices againſt me: I therefore obſerved her be-

haviour, in order to anticipate a discovery in which I did not doubt my being concerned; but I had not watched her a minute, before I guessed the whole, and thought myself able to discover the cause of those strong emotions which agitated her generous soul. She frowned, she bit her lips, she cast a scornful glance at Prudilla, that expressed both her anger and surprize; and then, with a look of disgust, continued reading for half a minute longer; when, as if unable to proceed, she repeated the same marks of aversion and astonishment: at last, laying the letter upon the table, and looking at Prudilla—'Did you ever hear, 'Madam,' said she, 'the least reflec-'tion upon Felicia's character? Did you 'ever hear her virtue, her prudence, or 'her reputation, called in question?'—'N—o, n—o, Madam,' returned she, with some confusion; at the same time changing colour, while my aunt rivetting her eyes to hers, seemed to increase her disorder. 'But why do you ask me 'that question again?' added she, with a hesitation that shewed she was greatly alarmed: 'you don't suspect me of—'of—injuring her so much as to say 'the contrary?'—'You then sincerely 'believe her to be perfectly virtuous?' resumed my aunt. 'Yes, Madam, in-'deed I do,' said she; 'upon my word, 'I do; as virtuous as myself.' Here her face, which a moment before was covered with a livid paleness, was now all of a flame. 'Yes, and a great deal 'more so, Madam,' replied my aunt, 'or I am much mistaken.'—'What do 'you mean, Madam?' cried Prudilla, rising, and casting a glance at the door; 'have you a mind to affront me? A 'great deal more so! I protest I don't 'understand you. A great deal more 'so!—A great deal more virtuous than 'I am! Is this the manner in which 'you treat your friends? Somebody 'has told you that I have writ—they 'have told you that—a—I have said 'something to Miss Felicia's prejudice, 'and you are unwise enough to believe 'them; but it is a lye, Madam,' continued she, raising her voice; 'an arrant 'lye; as great a falshood as ever was 'invented. I thought, Madam, you had 'too good an opinion of me to suspect 'my being guilty of such a thing.—But 'ladies, your servant—Your servant, 'Sir. I shall know how to resent this 'treatment. Ha! mighty pretty! more 'virtuous than I!'

Here she flew to the door in a violent rage; possibly to avoid any farther explanations: while Amelia jogged me with her elbow, and whispered—'Did 'you observe the word *writ?* She had 'like to have confessed all at once; she 'knows the contents of the letter; and 'that there is no name subscribed, as well 'as if she had read it this moment. O 'guilt,' continued she, shaking her head, 'what a fool dost thou make of us!' In reply, I only smiled, and shook my head too. In the mean time, Prudilla was pulling the lock, while she found all her endeavours to open the door prove fruitless; for my aunt, in coming in, foreseeing that it would be difficult to detain her long enough to convince my father of her guilt, had wisely turned the key, and put it in her pocket.

Prudilla was now enraged almost to a degree of madness; and turning about, called out aloud—'Open the door, Ma-'dam. By what authority do you pre-'tend to detain me here? Open the door, 'I say, or I'll break it open.' She here thundered at it with her feet; while my aunt, smiling, cried in a soft tone—'Come, come, Madam, softly, softly—'softly—pray don't expose yourself to 'the derision of my servants. Pray, 'Madam, be advised; this passion don't 'become you. Indeed it does not; it 'would almost make one suspect you of 'something very bad. Dear Madam, 'be so good as to sit down; you must 'not leave us so soon; upon my word 'we can't part with you yet.' My father all this while seemed filled with the greatest astonishment; he appeared neither to know how to act, nor what to say; however, reflecting at last, perhaps, that my aunt must have some extraordinary reason for this change of behaviour to a person whom a quarter of an hour before she treated with much politeness, he arose, and taking Prudilla by the hand, led her to her chair; at the same time intreating her to compose herself. When, seeing it was to no purpose to make any farther resistance, she peaceably resumed her seat; and fixing her eyes upon the floor, waited with the utmost uneasiness for what my aunt had farther to add. Her looks were now dejected and melancholy; and it was easy to see the reluctance she felt at being obliged, in spite

ſpite of herſelf, to hear the mortifying things ſhe had reaſon to expect.

'What is the matter?' cried my aunt, ſeeing her ſeated; 'you appear ſtrangely 'diſcompoſed: but, however, I muſt have 'ſome farther diſcourſe with you. You 'have been ſaying abundance of agree-'able things of my dear niece, for 'which ſhe is undoubtedly extremely 'obliged to you; but is ſhe really ſo 'virtuous, pious and diſcreet, as you 'have repreſented her? Pray tell us all 'you know of her'—and then putting on her ſpectacles, and taking the letter to my father out of her pocket, ſhe proceeded in a ſlow, reading tone—'and 'don't ſhew ſuch *a vaſt deal of reluc-'tance at com-mu-ni-cating the ſe-cret 'in-trigues of Miſs* Felicia.'—'I don't 'know what you mean, Madam,' replied ſhe. 'You treat me very un-'worthily, very unlike a gentlewoman.' —'Why, is not this letter yours?' returned my aunt. 'No, Madam,' ſhe replied; 'how ſhould it be mine? I ſcorn 'to uſe any body ill, much leſs Miſs 'Felicia. 'Twas barbarous to ſuſpect 'me of a crime of this nature; but we 'are all liable to be ſlandered.—Miſs 'Felicia,' added ſhe, wiping her eyes, 'why don't you take my part? I have 'often vindicated you on the like oc-'caſion. I could not bear to hear any 'body uſe you ill; 'tis cruel then in 'you to hear me treated ſo monſtrouſly 'on your account.'—'I humbly thank 'you, Madam,' returned I, 'though 'I cannot ſee that you could be put to 'much pains in vindicating my reputa-'tion, when you have never heard, as 'you ſay, the leaſt ill word of me.' This produced a general ſmile; only Amelia, delighted with the thought of ſpeedily ſeeing my innocence cleared up in the preſence of my father, could not forbear indulging the ill-natured pleaſure of encreaſing Prudilla's confuſion, by a triumphant laugh: when my aunt reſumed, with that ſuperiority in her air which conſcious virtue gives over the meanneſs of detected guilt—'Come, 'come, Madam, theſe ſubterfuges and 'low evaſions ſerve only to ſet your 'crimes in a more glaring light: nor 'do I expect to hear any thing elſe but 'ſuch abſurd contradictions, while you 'endeavour to clear yourſelf of thoſe 'baſe and ſcandalous actions which it 'is in my power to prove againſt you. 'This letter, this vile, this infamous 'and malicious letter, which equally 'ſhews the abandoned character and 'ignorance of the writer, is yours; I 'know it is—nor will any thing you 'can ſay perſuade me to believe the con-'trary. 'Tis your hand; and it exactly 'agrees with another I have here, that 'diſcovers the motive of your actions, 'and lays open and naked the wicked-'neſs and deformity of your corrupted 'ſoul. Is it for this you affect to ap-'pear virtuous, to practiſe the blackeſt 'vices with a better grace? to give an 'innocent mind all the diſtreſs, and 'ſhame, and ſorrow, which only a guilty 'one, like yours, ought to ſuffer? To 'eſtrange the affections of an indulgent 'parent from an only child, the delight 'of his life, the object of his deareſt 'hopes and fondeſt wiſhes? To throw 'a damp over all his proſpects of joy, 'by repreſenting her as guilty, as a diſ-'grace and reproach to his name, whom 'he has juſtly admired and loved for her 'virtues? Bluſh, Madam, if you have 'any ſenſe of ſhame, or the leaſt degree 'of that extraordinary modeſty to which 'you make ſuch mighty pretences—'bluſh, and look into yourſelf with 'horror. O my ſtars! for one of your 'years to attempt to delude a young 'man—a very young man—and to at-'tempt to frighten him to a compliance 'with your lewd deſires, by threatening 'to deprive him of his miſtreſs! What 'impudence! And to dare to attempt 'it too!—to attempt it by ſuch baſe me-'thods! But, to finiſh your ſhame, and 'convince my brother, that what I have 'ſaid is but too true, I'll read this vile 'letter.'

Here, putting on her ſpectacles, ſhe began in the ſlow tone of a perſon reading a hand almoſt unintelligible—

'UNKIND LUCIUS,

'IF I deſired to meet you in the dark 'laſt night, it was only to ſave my 'bluſhes. [How modeſt this was! (interrupted Amelia) while my aunt proceeded] Come to-night, and I'll refuſe 'you nothing.'

Prudilla had ſat all this while in a ſtupid kind of amazement, with a countenance on which was painted all the horror, and rage, and mortified detection, that guilt and unmaſked hypocriſy could give it. Her mouth was open, every feature diſtorted, and her whole

frame trembling and convulsed. She continued unable to speak, unable to interrupt what gave her such pain to hear. But now a sudden impulse of shame made her start from her seat, and snatching part of the letter out of my aunt's hand, in a violent passion, tore it to pieces, crying—'This is too much, Ma'am; nobody could bear it—it is a forgery—a cursed forgery.' While my aunt, smiling with an air of contempt, cast her eyes upon a small piece she held fast in her fingers, which presenting to my father, he read the following words, which I have now before me—

'fuse my request or tell
'w to be revenged on your
'acquaint her father with
'Your blushin

You are ready now, Madam, to wonder how I could think of giving you this unintelligible fragment, under which was remaining the three first letters of her name, for I cannot now be supposed to be in a disposition to puzzle you with riddles; but, however insignificant it may appear, it not only served to convince my father that the hand was exactly the same as that in which the letter was written that had given us so much uneasiness, but assisted my aunt in recollecting the whole lines, of which these were a part; which she might easily do, as it was hardly half an hour since she had read the letter entire; and then, indeed, they appeared of the greatest consequence, since they explained the motive of this dark proceeding.

My father having compared this piece with the letter on the table, returned it to my aunt, who looking at it with attention, after a moment's consideration, told us, she remembered the lines ran thus—

'BUT if you refuse my fond re-
'quest, or tell any body what you know
'I would have a secret, I know how to
'be revenged on your idol, that you
'doat so much upon, and will positively
'acquaint her father with every thing
'you would hide from him. Your
'blushing, &c.'

'These, I assure you,' continued my aunt, 'were exactly her words.'—'O 'monstrous!' cried Prudilla, throwing away the paper, which she had tore into small pieces; 'monstrous indeed! what 'vile insinuations! that I should be su-'spected of such crimes! But my piety 'and modesty are too well known for 'any body to believe it. I charged 'with thinking of a fellow! an odious, 'nasty fellow! But I'll still be revenged: 'I will make him smart for it. I—that 'never had an indecent thought in my 'life! I think of a filthy fellow! No, 'no, Madam, my reputation for chas-'tity is too well established for any body 'to imagine it. It is a lye; and, for 'what I know, you, Madam, may have 'a hand in it: but I can see through 'your plots. This, Sir, is a contriv-'ance between Lucius and your wick-'ed daughter, whom I never suspected 'till this moment; they would be re-'venged because I was enough your 'friend to oppose her marrying such a 'villain, such a debauched, lewd vil-'lain. And so, having my letter there, 'they must needs counterfeit my hand!' Here she forced a ridiculous, affected laugh, and then proceeded—'La! Miss, 'I did not think you had been so cun-'ning. But you shall know that my 'character is above censure.'

It would be impossible, Madam, to describe all the strange contortions, the convulsive gestures, and affected airs, with which this speech was uttered. She had at first the very look of a fury; she grinned, she stared, she stamped, and walked about the room, fluttering her fan; while her countenance, as well as every action, expressed the swell of rage, the sting of conscious shame, and all the mortifying pangs that could distort and rack a corrupted heart, ashamed of being discovered, too proud ingenuously to confess it's guilt, and too much heated by passion to attend to the little decorums of her character. But at last, thinking, in the heat of her rage, she might throw all upon Lucius and me, and perhaps persuade my father, at least, that she was ignorant of those crimes which touched her most to the quick, she changed her part, and, swallowed up by the thoughts of revenge, forgot that by this contradictory behaviour she took the most effectual way of destroying at once her character, and discovering the deformity of her black, abandoned soul. But she was incapable of reflection, and, hurried away by a torrent of passion, catched at the first relief that offered; a relief that made her forget her shame, and feel a shadowy dawn of triumph.

triumph. Good God! can there be worse miseries than those which arise from guilt? What destruction does it occasion, while it's very reliefs plunge us into more aggravated wretchedness, into deeper horrors!

My father, now unable to contain his indignation, arose, and damping the triumphant smile, which just began to quiver on her countenance, by a stern and contemptuous glance—'Madam,' cried he, 'don't think it in your power 'to impose upon me by these low artifices; I can see, through all these 'doublings, the weak subterfuges of an 'abandoned mind. If my daughter 'has no crimes but what such a vile 'hypocrite as you can reproach her 'with, I shall do her the justice to think 'her innocent.'

What a beam of joy, at these words, shot through my soul! My aunt now arose, and opening the door, cried—'Begone, Madam; for your brother's 'sake, I shall be more tender of your 'reputation than you deserve, but never 'presume again to enter into my house. 'Go, and blush in secret—I am sorry 'that ever I knew you.' Here Prudilla left us, hanging down her head, and muttering something we could not perfectly understand.

But I find I must break off. When I began this letter, I fancied it would be very short; but I am got, before I am aware, to my usual length. Sure I must be an extravagent lover of writing to send you such long epistles. The post is ready to set out, and I have but just time to repeat my assurances that I am, and ever shall be, your ladyship's most affectionate friend,

FELICIA.

LETTER XX.

AS soon, Madam, as Prudilla was gone, elated with the thoughts of what had passed, and charmed with the delightful prospect of a speedy reconciliation with my father, I was going to embrace this favourable moment of throwing myself at his feet, and begging to be restored to his esteem; but I no sooner rose up, in order to make these submissions, than, stopped by the pride of virtue, I reflected that I had already made too many attempts to soften his unjust anger; and that, if he was now convinced of my innocence, it did not become me to entreat for what I had a right to demand from him. 'Shall I, like 'a criminal,' said I to myself, 'supplicate for forgiveness? In what have I 'offended? It is for guilt to stoop so 'low, innocence has no need of stooping.' At this thought I sat down again; and my father and my aunt, still warm with resentment, being now seated too, could not help making some reflections on the odious deformity of Prudilla's mind.

'What an abandoned hypocrite!' cried my father, with a look still disturbed by passion; 'what a vile incendiary! But how ridiculously inconsistent was her conduct! I confess I 'am not able to think it, in any instance, 'agreeable to common sense; nor can I 'determine which is the most remarkable, her folly, or her wickedness. 'What a heap of contradictions! 'of absurd, palpable contradictions!'—'Really Sir,' replied my aunt, 'I cannot think her so inconsistent with herself as you do; her artifices appear to 'me all of a piece. Thinking Felicia 'an obstacle to her criminal desires, she 'endeavours to prevail with you to send 'for her up to town; you unexpectedly 'come to search into the truth of what 'she had alledged against your daughter; when, dreading a discovery that 'might prove fatal to her reputation, 'she comes, hoping to clear herself of 'suspicion by contradicting every thing 'she had said in the letter; and at the 'same time colouring over her artifices 'by the grossest flattery, endeavours to 'persuade us that our air does not agree 'with her constitution; and thus, by a 'concern for her health, and an affectation of the strictest friendship, she 'flattered herself with carrying on her 'grand design, which is still the removal of your daughter. And, as to 'the rest of her conduct,' continued my aunt, 'it is easy to be accounted for, 'from the strong perturbations of a guilty 'mind, terrified at the thoughts of a 'discovery, and therefore in too great 'a ferment to attend to the nice decorums which were necessary to carry on 'such a difficult design, and too much 'perplexed to secure herself by the subtle 'aids of a ready imagination. She affects to appear a lady of the strictest 'piety, and most unblemished sanctity 'of life; she is the censor of the neigh-

'bourhood;

'bourhood; and not the ſmalleſt fault 'can eſcape her notice; judge, then, how 'hard it muſt be to carry on this diſ-'guiſe when ſo cloſely attacked, and 'how terrible the apprehenſion of being 'ſeen in her true deformity!'

'Right, right,' cried my father; 'ſhe 'is more ſubtle than I imagined; at leaſt 'I ought to think ſo,' added he, in a tender tone, 'in vindication of my too 'eaſy credulity. I have then injured my 'Felicia!' I could hear no more—I flew into his arms; while he, ſeeing my intention, aroſe and ſtepped forwards to receive me. What a delightful, painful moment!

O my dear friend, you cannot conceive even a diſtant idea of half the ſatiſfaction and joy I felt at this inſtant. Something like the voice of nature huſhed my troubled ſoul into a peaceful tranſport, into a rapture leſs tumultuous, though not leſs pleaſing, than that of two meeting lovers. My life ſeemed to run up to it's ſource, and to return back again in a ſweeter and more tranquil ſtream. I embraced my father, as if I had not ſeen him till that moment, as if that was the happy inſtant of his arrival. Every care, every trouble, was then forgot; my preſent joy took up all my thoughts, and all thoſe thoughts were extaſy. My father, having tenderly embraced me, with the affection of a parent who had found a child more than doubly loſt; while nature, riſing in his eyes, ſwelled into a tear, and rolled down his awful cheeks; ſeated me in a chair that was next his own, and taking hold of my hand—'My dear Felicia,' ſaid he, while all the parent guſhed in his eyes, 'I have dearly ſuffered in too 'eaſily believing thee guilty; but canſt 'thou forgive the diſquiet I have given 'thee, and overlook this weak credulity 'that—' 'Dear Sir,' cried I, interrupting him, unable to hold out any longer, and almoſt aſhamed of his condeſcenſion, 'I can't bear to hear you. Is this 'the language of a father to a daughter? No, Sir, it ſhall never be yours 'to me; you oppreſs me too much by 'this unmerited goodneſs. The terrible 'diſquiets we have both felt muſt be 'placed to Prudilla's account. But I 'heartily forgive her; ſhe has been ſufficiently mortified: we will think of 'her then no more. My conduct, my 'reſignation to your will, ſhall ſuffi-'ciently ſhew how little I deſerve her 'ſlanders. You ſhall know me to be 'dutiful; I will obey you in every 'thing you can deſire.'

Here he preſſed my hand; and, after a ſhort ſilence, turning to my aunt, aſked who the perſon was on whom I had placed my affections? 'He is,' ſaid ſhe, (for here, Madam, I can't help repeating her words, ſhe talked ſo charmingly) 'he is a young gentleman, of 'a family not inferior to ours; but this 'is a trifling circumſtance when compared with his perſonal virtues. He 'has a noble dignity of ſentiment, a 'generous and humane heart, a deli-'cacy of ſoul that renders him equally 'beloved and admired. This, Sir, is 'the character I give of him; and 'I don't queſtion, Sir, but you'll find 'it ſtrictly juſt. If you enquire abroad, 'you will hear too of temperance, affa-'bility, an engaging temper, and, in 'ſhort, of all the virtues you would 'wiſh to ſee in a ſon-in-law.'—'I am 'ſorry to hear it,' returned my father; 'it will then be ſo much the harder for 'my daughter to comply with what I 'have to propoſe to her. I have engaged 'my word to ſolicit her conſent to marry the ſon of one of my moſt intimate 'friends; and have aſſured him, that 'ſhe pays ſo ſtrict an obedience to my 'will, that he need not doubt of my 'ſucceſs. He has a fortune ſuperior to 'hers, a circumſtance that I cannot 'overlook; nor does he want any qua-'lification to entitle him to the charac-'ter of a worthy man, or a gentleman. 'Let me ſee now, Felicia,' added he, addreſſing himſelf to me, 'that you can 'obey my inclinations rather than your 'own; for I will not do you the injury 'to imagine, that you have ſo far en-'gaged yourſelf without my conſent, as 'to be unable to go back.'—'Sir,' replied I, with my eyes fixed on the floor, 'I am all obedience. I never propoſed 'to marry without your approbation; 'but let me at leaſt beg that I may have 'time to conquer my heart, and ſubdue 'my rebellious inclinations. I will 'ſtudy to obey you, and do all in my 'power to render myſelf worthy your 'eſteem.'—'This, my dear,' returned he, 'is all I deſire. It would indeed 'be a ſhock to decency and virtue, as 'well as the greateſt injury to the man 'thou wouldſt endeavour to render hap-'py, wert thou forced into his arms, 'while thy tendereſt affections were

'placed

'placed upon another. But time, and 'the perfections of the gentleman I have 'chosen for thee, will, I hope, make 'that desirable change, which will be 'necessary to compleat the felicity of you 'both.'

Could our happy reconciliation be concluded with a subject more capable of giving a damp to my rising joys, and to the exquisite satisfactions of filial affection! My heart, though dissolved in duty, felt the whole force of the last demand; and at the same instant that I gave up all power over myself, and consented to forsake my dear Lucius, he appeared present to my mind in all his charms, in all the radiant charms of virtue, drooping under his unhappy lot, while the tender languishment of his soul seemed to reproach my too easy compliance. But what could I do? Could I refuse any thing to a father, who had a right to demand every thing from me? No; that was impossible; I was then in a disposition to pay him the most rigorous obedience. Nor indeed could he have made any request that would have given me equal pain to grant: for wealth and splendour, and all the alluring gaieties of life, appear but trifles, when compared with the more important interests of our hearts. Love, in the very instant when I endeavoured to give up the soft, the tender passion, resumed it's empire, and, in spite of all my resolution, flowed in upon my soul, and embittered the generous efforts of my duty; nor could I thus formally resign the extatick thought of spending my life with Lucius, without feeling some of the most cruel pangs. However, endeavouring to collect myself as much as possible, by recalling the pleasing ideas of our reconciliation, I assumed an air of ease and resignation; but as this was a situation very difficult to support long together, and as I found myself still disordered with the pain in my head, I seized the first opportunity of retiring to my chamber; where my supper being brought to me, I went to bed.

I shall not, Madam, attempt to describe the opposite passions I had to struggle with, now I was retired from company, and was at liberty to indulge all the various reflections that intruded themselves upon my mind. It is sufficient to say, that I felt a confused and disturbed mixture of pleasure and pain. But whether the reliefs I found from the consideration of having regained the favour of an indulgent parent, together with the thoughts of the joy he felt at finding me still innocent, were more powerful than all the cause I had for uneasiness; or whether my spirits sinking, under the pleasing flow of those dutiful affections which I had indulged without restraint, made me more heavy than usual; I soon fell into a delightful slumber, which lasted till morning, when I found myself perfectly recovered from every indisposition: but the moment I opened my eyes, the dear idea of my lover returned again to my mind; while I recollected his air, his words, his gestures, the purity of his soul, and the sublimity of his virtues, all had a thousand winning graces; pleasing in the review, yet painful in the idea of their being nothing to me, since I must forget to admire, forget to love this dear engaging man, whom my heart represented as all lovely.

I was in this situation, Madam, when I wrote you my last letter, which I began as soon as I had slipped on my clothes, and which took me up great part of the day in writing; and indeed, though I then filled two sheets of paper with my scribbling, I ought in strict propriety to have carried it thus far. But my adventures come in such swift succession, that I cannot pretend to keep pace with them. I have a very interesting scene to relate; and as I foresee it will take up too much time for me to give it you now entire, I chuse to defer it till my next.

With my most humble respects to his lordship, I am yours, &c.

FELICIA.

LETTER XXI.

DEAR MADAM,

I HAD such a variety of painful and agreeable things remaining when I concluded my last, that it was with the extremest reluctance I found myself obliged, either to break off, or to give you such a loose general account of the changes in my affairs, as would be entirely unaffecting; or else, after having raised your curiosity, to break off, and give you the pain of waiting several days in a tedious suspence. But I have now an opportunity of continuing my story, without any of those inconveniences.

The day after that in which I was restored

restored to my father's favour, and lost to the pleasing joys of love, and all the flattering delights I had formed an idea of, the sweets of the most innocent sympathies, and the uniform transports of a blissful union of souls; the day after this important one, I say, I scarcely saw my father till the evening: for having, soon after I arose in the morning, tenderly enquired into the state of my health, he left us to spend the day with some neighbouring gentlemen. Upon his return we were all surprized to find him ruffled and disturbed by passion; and naturally enquiring what was the cause of his uneasiness, how great was my astonishment and concern to hear him tell me, that he had received the grossest insults from Lucius's father! 'Tis true,' said he, 'he was disordered 'with wine; but it is also true too, that 'he has affronted me in the presence of 'several gentlemen, in a manner that 'I can't help resenting. As I had 'given him no cause of offence, every 'body took my part; and, as is usual 'on such occasions, freely gave me an 'account of the several debaucheries 'of his life: he is guilty of every ex-'travagance; and is, they tell me, just 'upon the brink of ruin. Can I think 'of being allied to such a wretched fa-'mily! No, child, I must repeat my 'request, that you would never more 'entertain the least thought of his un-'happy son.'

Though I had before hardly any hopes of ever obtaining Lucius, yet I could not hear this repeated injunction without feeling a great addition of pain. My father was now confirmed in his opposition to my desires, and had some reason to be averse to our union. Could I then entertain the least distant thought of a change in my affairs? I durst not even think it possible. I had not the least glimmering hope of ever being happy, unless I could erase from my heart the tender impressions I found there of my dear Lucius, and that seemed as great an impossibility as that I should ever obtain him. I was so much struck with this thought, that I was hardly able to make an answer, and only replied—'I am extremely sorry for it, Sir; but 'if you knew Lucius, you would be far 'from thinking him guilty of his fa-'ther's crimes, of which he is perfectly 'incapable: but I shall say no more; I 'will study to obey you.'

My aunt, perhaps, thinking this an improper time to vindicate my lover, as my father was not a little disturbed with passion, seemed to avoid entering into the subject. But Mellifont, who, as he was upon the point of being united to Amelia, had been fully let into the state of our affairs, and who was now present, could not help vindicating his friend with a warmth that greatly increased my esteem for him, and which I saw by Amelia's eyes was not much less pleasing to her: but all he could say had but little effect on my father; his most forcible arguments could not persuade him to believe, but that the vices of a parent must have some effect on the minds of his children. It is true he was not now in a disposition to hear reason, especially on a subject so opposite to the tumultuous state of his own mind, which had fixed prepossessions almost unconquerable. But he was soon in a better disposition; Lucius himself removed all his prejudices, and convinced him of his innocence, and in a happy moment inspired him with the highest esteem.

The next morning, as I lay longer than usual, I breakfasted in bed; a thing very uncommon in this part of the world, where, as I have told you, it is not unusual for fine ladies to rise with the sun. But I had scarcely drank my chocolate, when Amelia came running into my chamber, to inform me that Lucius was just come, and that he was now in a close conversation with my aunt. Seized with a sudden flutter and perturbation of spirits, I leaped out of bed, and slipped on my cloaths with as much speed as possible, at the same time asking her abundance of questions all in a breath; as whether he had seen my father? if he had informed him who he was? what passed between them? and several other things I was desirous of knowing: and so great was my impatience to be informed of these particulars, that I could hardly stay for an answer; I would be informed of every thing at once, and was almost angry at her making me lose the time of asking her. And was not this eagerness very natural, Madam? Indeed I could not help it; I acted merely from instinct. It was my heart that wanted to be informed; and the strange emotion I felt there caused such a swift succession of ideas, that every moment's delay seemed an age. Amelia talks with as much fluency as most people I ever

ever converſed with, yet I thought ſhe dreamed out her ſyllables to an unnatural length; and though I was never dreſſed ſo quick in my life, I could not be perſuaded that I ever was half ſo long about it. But I do not conſider, that while I am deſcribing my own impatience, I am ſtill increaſing yours. She told me that my father, not knowing who he was, had behaved with the politeneſs due to a ſtranger; and upon my aunt's ſaying he was one of her beſt friends, had even gone ſo far as to tell him, that he ſhould be glad of the honour of his acquaintance; and that it would be a particular favour, if, now he was there, he would give him a few hours of his company.

'What a happy omen!' cried I. 'Is 'it poſſible? Are you ſure he ſaid ſo? 'Well, and what elſe? Come, quick, 'my dear.' With what an extaſy were theſe words uttered! 'What elſe, Ma-'dam,' returned ſhe; 'what ſhould he 'ſay elſe? He ſaid nothing more, I 'aſſure you. You will eaſily imagine 'that Lucius accepted the propoſal.'— 'Well, but my dear Amelia,' returned I, with the ſame rapidity, 'are you ſure 'you have told me all? Come, begin 'again, and don't forget the leaſt parti-'cular.' Here Amelia, with a ſmile, did as I deſired; only adding, that my father ſeemed agreeably ſurprized at Lucius's graceful manner of expreſſing himſelf. 'Did he?' cried I, with a freſh tranſport; 'how could you forget ſuch a 'charming circumſtance? But what, 'then, were Lucius's words?'

Thus I employed my time till I was ready to go down ſtairs; when reflecting that what I had conſidered as a ſubject of joy was but an airy viſion, a deluſion of fancy, ſince the eaſe and politeneſs of my father's behaviour to Lucius proceeded only from his not knowing him, my fears now returned with double weight, while my heart ached and fluttered with a painful palpitation, which increaſed at every ſtep I took as I drew nearer my father and my lover. 'In what a terri-'ble ſuſpence,' thought I, 'is poor Lu-'cius! How will he be able to make 'the important diſcovery? Important!' thought I again; 'how is it important, 'ſince it will only raiſe my father's re-'ſentment?' And the next moment I imagined I ſaw him pale and trembling at hearing my father's ſtern command to forbear his addreſſes. But theſe torturing reflections were in a great meaſure put an end to by my entering the room, where Lucius, my father, and my aunt, were in full converſation on ſome indifferent ſubjects. Lucius, the moment he ſaw me, aroſe with a bluſh, and bowing low, ſeated himſelf again, and continued the converſation. What a ſtrange concourſe of wild and incoherent ideas now diſtracted my heart! My ſoul, filled with a confuſed agony, was ſcarcely able to attend to any diſtinct ſenſations; I was bewildered in a maze of thought. What a ſtrange ſituation of mind! 'Is this the laſt time,' ſaid I to myſelf, with a ſigh, as ſoon as I was capable of giving the leaſt order to my ideas, 'the laſt, the very laſt time, of my 'ſeeing this dear man? the laſt time that 'I ſhall hear his voice? that voice that 'has ſo often awakened all the powers of 'my ſoul to harmony and love! that 'voice which I have ſo often heard with 'rapture, while, as if all ear, I have hung 'upon his lips, and liſtened to the ten-'der, melodious accents of his tongue! 'O how ſhall I ſupport his abſence! 'how tear myſelf from this dear perſon 'for ever! Never more to converſe 'with my fellow mind, never more to 'hear and ſee his heart ſpeak to me! To 'forget him; to forget the dear ſympa-'thies of love; to be ignorant of what 'paſſes in his breaſt—how hard the taſk! 'O duty, how rigorous are thy de-'mands!—But 'tis reſolved; and I will, 'I will obey.'

Had I not been ſeated in the darkeſt part of the room, and at the fartheſt diſtance from my father, it would have been impoſſible for him not to have taken notice of the diſorder theſe cruel thoughts imprinted on my countenance. But I was ſoon diverted from theſe gloomy images by Lucius; who trembling, with a ſoft and timorous air, changed all at once the ſubject that had employed the attention of all in the company but me; and fixing his eyes ſteadily on my father—'You have profeſſed an eſteem for 'me, Sir,' ſaid he, 'which neither my 'merit nor the ſmall time I have been 'in your company can juſtify. I am 'quite unknown to you; you are igno-'rant that I have raiſed my ambitious 'hopes to the happineſs of being allied 'to you: but, however you receive this 'confeſſion, do me the juſtice to believe, 'that I have never preſumed to harbour a 'thought of obtaining your daughter,

'without your consent; I love her too 'tenderly to injure you, or to think of 'depriving her of your affection, by 'persuading her to forget her duty. 'You alone have a right to dispose of 'her; and, O Sir! it is in your power 'to render me happy or miserable!' With what pain did he utter these words, and with what an earnest, beseeching look, were they concluded! As for my father, the moment Lucius, softening his voice, began to change the discourse, he started, and viewing him with an earnestness mixed with surprize, seemed to hear him with patience, and even let him conclude without once attempting to interrupt him; while I, swallowed up in attention, felt for some time a suspension of all thought, of all sensation and idea: my soul seemed a void; every passion was hushed; and every power waited the next words, to teach them how to act, and to set all in motion again: when my father replied—'I shall nei-'ther take upon me to enquire how far 'you have carried this regard for my 'authority, nor whether you are wor-'thy of her affection. She is very dear 'to me, and I have chosen a husband 'for her every way capable of making her 'happy; you will oblige me, then, if 'you promise never to see her more.'—'Well, Sir, I cannot complain,' returned he, with a trembling voice; 'this 'is no more than I ought to have ex-'pected. I must lose the lovely Feli-'cia, then, for ever! Well, you shall be 'obeyed; whatever it cost me, you shall!' Here he paused, as if unable to proceed; and then continued—'No, I'll never be 'an obstacle to her happiness; she shall 'never more be made uneasy by my pre-'sence, nor tempted to disobey you by 'knowing my despair.'

O Madam, it was impossible for me to support the effects of such generous, painful sentiments! A flood of tender sorrow poured into my heart; my head grew giddy; a thick film in an instant overspread my eyes; and trembling and sick, while every thing ran round, I seemed sinking into death. My aunt perceived me, while my head was yet supported by the back of my chair, and my looks steadily fixed on Lucius; when observing my paleness, and crying out, 'Felicia is fainting!' she ran to support me in her arms, just as I was ready to fall upon the floor. It was a considerable time, I believe, before I was brought to myself; but being still very sick and low-spirited, my aunt advised me to be laid upon my bed; when Amelia supporting me by one arm, and one of the servants by the other, I was conveyed into my chamber, where I remained for some time in a state little better than that of an entire insensibility, during which my aunt was so kind as to keep me company, sitting all the while by my bed-side with a bottle of salts in her hand.

As soon as I had perfectly recovered my senses, and began to look about me, the first question I asked was, if Lucius was gone? but my aunt could not satisfy me. I then desired her to tell me how he behaved, and what impression my disorder had upon him; but she avoided answering my question, by saying—'Pray, my dear, don't make these 'useless enquiries. As you must now 'endeavour to forget him, it would 'have but an unhappy effect to store 'your mind with thoughts that would 'only increase the difficulty of conquer-'ing your affection.' But she had scarcely made this prudent reply, when Amelia came running into my room, and embracing me with an extasy of joy—'O, my dear,' cried she, with tears starting from her eyes, 'Lucius 'has conquered; my uncle submits, and 'gives you up to your lover!'—'It is 'impossible!' cried I, filled with an amazement that almost deprived me again of my just recovered senses. 'It is true! 'it is true! I assure you it is true!' resumed she, with the same transport. Here my aunt checked her friendly ardour, which she feared might overpower my spirits; and forcing me to take a glass of wine and drops, to prepare me for what I had to hear, desired Amelia to relate every thing that had passed; when seizing her hand, I entreated her to make haste, but not to forget the least particular. She smiled at my eagerness; and with that satisfaction in her looks which always appears when a good mind has it in it's power to confer an extraordinary joy, without any ceremony began thus—

'The moment my mamma ran to 'prevent your falling from your chair, 'Lucius cast his eyes upon you too; but 'he no sooner beheld you, my dear, in 'that frightful situation, than he ap-'peared in a disorder very little differ-'ent 'from yours; but immediately re-'collecting himself, he joined with my un-

'cle

'cle in using all his endeavours to recover you. He ran himself to fetch water, and gave it to your father, who 'sprinkled your face: he ran for more; 'he flew into the dining-room for my 'mother's smelling-bottle, then for some drops. In short, we had no need of 'any of the servants; he himself was 'more active than they all put together 'could have been, and did a thousand 'mean offices for you, if any thing can 'be called mean that is done for a person in such a situation. His life, his 'happiness, his all seemed at stake. And 'though he could not have the least hopes 'of obtaining you, his looks expressed 'a tenderness and solicitude that I could 'not help thinking even exceeded your 'father's. Though he durst not approach you with the same freedoms 'as he did, yet he stood behind him, 'with his eyes fixed on your faded 'cheeks, while the tears ran down his, 'that with his fright wanted little of 'being as pale as yours; but the instant 'your colour began a little to return, 'his came in proportion; and as his apprehensions vanished, his countenance 'entirely changed. You opened your 'eyes; we said you would recover; he 'was in a fresh transport, and seemed at 'that moment to have forgot that that 'was to be the last time of his seeing 'you. Ah, my dear Felicia,' continued she, smiling, 'do you think Mellifont, in the same case, would have 'expressed an equal tenderness for me? 'I can hardly believe it.'

'O, my dear Lucius!' cried I, shedding some extatick tears. 'But proceed.'—'Well,' resumed she, 'as soon 'as I came from helping you up stairs, 'having asked me how you did, he 'turned to my uncle, and giving him 'a supplicating look—"Since I must "never more," said he, with a sigh, "behold your dear Felicia, permit me, "Sir, to stay till she is come to herself. "I don't ask to see her again; but——" "Enough, Sir," returned my uncle; "you may stay, and welcome; and I "take this opportunity of thanking you "for the service we have received from "you in giving us your assistance: it "was generous; and what, after the declaration I had made you, I had not "the least reason to expect; but, instead of being reproached, I was to "be obliged. My sister has done you "justice in saying you have a mind very "different from your father's, and "therefore I believe you will not vindicate his extravagances; and it is his "character, more than any disparity "of circumstances, that makes me averse "to your having my daughter; but if "you are an honest man, you will not "justify him. The savage brute had——" "Who, Sir? what, my "father?" cried Lucius; while I was 'surprized to hear the person who had 'hitherto spoke with such submissive respect, now assume a tone so resolute 'and lofty. "Yes, your father!" returned my uncle, as loud as he. "He "insulted me, vilely insulted me, in the "presence of several gentlemen, who "turned him out of the room. They "gave me his character; related many "of his outrages; and convinced me "that he is a debauched, abandoned "fellow—a villain!"—"My father a "debauched, abandoned fellow!" resumed Lucius, in the same tone; "my father a villain! Nothing but "your near relation to Felicia could prevent my resenting the opprobrious "epithets. Heavens! my father called "a villain, and can I hear it with pa"tience? O Sir," continued he, softening his voice, "spare my father!"—"Why, is it not true?" returned my 'uncle. "Is he not my father?" 'cried Lucius, interrupting him. "O "Sir! can I have so little delicacy, "so little sense of duty, or honour, "as not to resent such language? "Can I be a son, and yet so void "of filial affection, as not to see my "heart rise with indignation, and every passion swell to justify my father?"—"Then you justify your "father?" replied again my uncle. "I beg," returned Lucius, "you "would not press this subject. You "are Miss Felicia's father, and he is "mine; I would therefore preserve a "respect for you both. Mine has, I "confess, his faults, but he has his "virtues too. His faults I would conceal from all the world; I would bury "them in eternal oblivion; I would blot "them even from my own remembrance; I would wipe them from my "thoughts, to save myself the preposterous shame of blushing for a parent. "But yet, whatever he may deserve I "am sure I don't deserve to hear him "treated so."

'My uncle here,' continued Amelia,

'sat fixed in admiration, while friend-
'ship and surprize were mingled in his
'looks. He was silent; he seemed at a
'loss for an answer: when, at last, giving
'Lucius his hand—"Your sentiments
"are admirable, Sir," cried he; "and
"I can't help thinking him very happy,
"in having in so generous a son so
"good an advocate. I beg pardon for
"my want of delicacy in shocking
"yours." Here hesitating a moment,
'with a friendly disorder in his counte-
'nance, that shewed him stopped by an
'affecting thought which he waited to
'indulge, he resumed—"But if a fa-
"ther, who has taken so little care of
"his family, can inspire in a son such
"tender duty, such noble friendship,
"how great would be that son's affec-
"tion, had he one who employed the
"whole bent of his soul in contributing
"to his felicity?" You can't conceive,
'my dear Felicia,' continued she, 'how
'feelingly these words were expressed.
'Lucius himself, notwithstanding his
'disappointed hopes, seemed extremely
'moved with them; when, with a co-
'lour as red as scarlet, he hastily re-
'plied—"'Twas in you, Sir, that I
"hoped to have found such a father.
'But why did I hope it?—that is now
"im; ossible—I shall see your dear, your
"charming Felicia, no more. It is
"true, my presumption in daring to
"love her is inexcusable: but I will try
"whether absence and philosophy can
"teach me to conquer my passion; if
"they cannot, I must be unhappy."
'Here he arose, with a visible confusion
'in his looks; and added, with a sigh—
"Pray tend to know how she does, for
"I must retire."

'Lucius having taken a turn or two
'about the room, with a disorder that I
'don't know how to express, but which
'seemed to arise from his thinking he
'had said too much, by confessing the
'pleasure he had felt in hoping for a fa-
'ther of my uncle's virtue—for those
'words seemed rather to break from his
'heart than his tongue—Lucius, I would
'say, having taken a turn about the
'room, and finding my uncle make no
'reply to his desire of knowing how
'you did, opened the door, saying—
"Your, servant, Sir; I wish Felicia
"happy. I will send myself, to know
"if she is recovered." When, seeing
'him going, your father arose, desired
'him to stay a little longer, and told him
'he could not part with him so suddenly.'
'Upon this your lover returned; and
'they both being again seated, af-
'ter a short silence, (for your father,
'my dear,' continued she, 'appeared
'buried in thought) he resumed—'I
"confess, Sir, I admire your virtues,
"and am persuaded we shall part upon
"much better terms: pray let me know
"the circumstances of your family, and
"whether you have any estate in your
"own hands." Here I took upon me
'to reply, and endeavoured to give him
'the characters of Sophronia and Ma-
'rilla, which I told my uncle I could
'do with a much better grace than Lu-
'cius, as his modesty might be offended
'should he do justice to persons whose
'merit was so nearly allied to his, that
'he could not be supposed to praise them
'as they deserved, without reflecting
'great part of the honour upon him-
'self. But, my dear Felicia, this was
'not my real motive; I could not sit by
'and see such a charming reconciliation
'carried on, without desiring at least to
'have a small share in it. I had waited
'a good while to put in a word that
'might be of service to you, but could
'not find a better opportunity than that
'which now offered.'

'Well, thank you, my dear,' replied I; 'but pray proceed. You might have
'told me that to-morrow. Come,
'make haste.'—'Your father, Miss,'
continued she, 'appeared extremely
'delighted with what he heard; nor
'was he much less pleased to hear Lu-
'cius tell him that he had an estate,
'(which, though much less than yours,
'might serve to vindicate his giving
'him his daughter;) and indeed he was
'no sooner informed of these parti-
'culars, than taking Lucius's hand,
'with an affectionate smile, he cried—
"Your virtue, Sir, has conquered. I
"admire your sentiments, and approve
"Felicia's choice. I give you my
"daughter, and wish you both all ima-
"ginable happiness." With a rapi-
'dity as quick as thought, he now threw
'himself at my uncle's feet. He was
'unable to speak; he grasped his hand,
'wetted it with tears; and I having
'waited for a minute for some extatick
'rapture, and perceiving him still silent,
'flew to be the first messenger of this
'delightful news.'

'O!' cried I aloud, 'sure this is all
'a dream! Am I—am I so happy! so

'very

'very happy! Where is my father? 'where is my Lucius? I will run and 'indulge my fondnefs for them both.' Then, feeing my aunt laughing at my rapture, I flew into her arms, embraced her, and then Amelia. 'Come,' continued I, 'let us go; I can't ftay a mo-'ment.' They humoured my impatience, and all of us ran together into the parlour. My father was ftanding with his eyes affectionately fixed on Lucius, who ftood by him holding his hand, and I fuppofe giving a loofe to all the rapture of a tranfported heart; when breaking from him, my father flew to receive me with open arms. 'Come, my child,' cried he, 'fhare in my fatisfaction. I 'approve your choice. It fhall now be 'this gentleman's ftudy to render you 'happy.' Here having embraced me with a tender affection, he took hold of my hand; when afking Lucius for his, he laid mine upon it, and then grafping both together—'God blefs you both, my 'children,' cried he, lifting up his eyes, while the tears ftole down his cheeks; 'God blefs you both, and render your 'happinefs eternal. Do you, my fon, 'remember,' added he, ftill holding our hands, while he fuffered Lucius to clofe his upon mine, with a tender preffure, which my father rendered yet more pleafing, by holding both ours between his; 'remember, that as by your vir-'tues you now arrive at the height of 'your wifhes, fo only virtue will render 'your happinefs compleat and durable.' Then turning to me, 'he proceeded—'And do you, my dear, remember, that 'now all your felicity in this life de-'pends on your pleafing Lucius. He is 'your own choice; and I command you, 'as you expect to be happy, never to 'mention, or by the leaft action let him 'think, that you believe him obliged 'to you for the great addition that, by 'your means, is made to his fortune. 'God blefs you both, my children!' To this my aunt and Amelia gave a hearty Amen; when giving us an affectionate fhake, he let go our hands, and Lucius embraced me with tranfport, while my aunt and coufin drew near to congratulate us on this happy occafion. Their eyes fparkled with joy, their faces glowed with pleafure, and every word and every look fpoke the fympathy between their hearts and ours. Wherever we turned our eyes, the foul of happinefs fat beaming in every look; they beheld us with the tranfport Mr. Thomfon defcribes, when he fays—

"Twas friendfhip heighten'd by the mutual
"wifh,
"Th' enchanting hope and fympathetick
"glow,
"Struck from the charmful eye. Devoting
"each
"To love."——

While my father ftood looking on, with a fuperior degree of conficious pleafure in his air:

"Supremely happy in th' awaken'd power
"Of giving joy."——

The evening was fpent with pleafure and delight. Sophronia and Marilla were fent for, and bore a part in our common fatisfaction. And nothing then feemed wanting to render our felicity compleat. Yet I affure you, Madam, not all this delight could prevent my anticipating the pleafure you would receive from this happy news, nor erafe from my thoughts the remembrance of how much I am your ladyfhip's moft obliged fervant,

FELICIA

LETTER XXII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WHILE I was reading yours, every line of which expreffed the moft generous and tender fympathy in my diftrefs, I could not help being extremely delighted with the thought, that you were perhaps the fame moment engaged in perufing my laft, where you would learn, that you might freely banifh all your fears, fince I muft now appear greatly above your pity. It was a pleafing reflection, Madam; and I affure you, I could not entertain myfelf with the fatisfaction you would receive on this occafion, without feeling a great increafe of my own. Sure nothing can be more natural than to fhare in the joy we ourfelves occafion, when felf-love and friendfhip both confpire to aid the fympathetick delight; and to reflect back the pleafure another feels from our happinefs.

But

But what a ſtrange ſcheme! Could any thing be more extravagant! To ſend all my letters to my father, to open his eyes to the perfections of my lover, and to convince him, as you ſay, from thoſe unguarded overflowings of my heart, that our paſſion has been hitherto carried on with the ſtricteſt regard to virtue, and all the obligations of duty. Really it was an excellent artifice to remove his prejudices; and, for what I know, might have been attended with ſucceſs. I was preſent when my father received the parcel, and could not help being a witneſs of the ſurprize he diſcovered at ſeeing a large bundle of letters incloſed; when having given me that directed for me, and read yours to himſelf, he called my aunt aſide, and ſmiling, retired with her to read their contents, while I was under little or no apprehenſions of the conſequence of having thoſe tender tranſcripts of my heart diſcovered; for though I had entirely forgotten the contents of moſt of my letters, a conſciouſneſs of the ſincerity of my duty kept my mind at eaſe, and, would not ſuffer me to fear that I had wrote any thing that could poſſibly offend him. But I had no ſooner read yours, and indulged for a conſiderable time ſome of thoſe pleaſing thoughts due to friendſhip and you, than a ſudden reſtleſs impulſe of curioſity made me long to know what effect my letters had on thoſe intereſted perſons, my father and my aunt. I therefore aroſe, in order to attempt a diſcovery, which I had not patience to wait for till they made it themſelves: I found them in my aunt's cloſet; and the door not being locked, I gently puſhed it a little open, and ſaw them both ſeated with their backs towards me, with the eſcritore, before which they were ſitting, covered with papers. The good lady was liſtening to my father, who continued reading with a low voice, while ſhe looked over him; but I had not ſtood a minute in this ſituation, when turning their heads ſo that I diſcovered half their faces, on which were imprinted ſome lively traces of ſatisfaction, they gave each other a glance, my father crying out at the ſame time, in a tranſport—'O the dear girl!' Elated with this tender exclamation, I took a ſtep farther, and forgetting that I was only a kind of a ſpy, and ought therefore to be concealed, I puſhed the door a little too rudely, which grating againſt the floor, they both ſtarted, and turning their eyes to the place from whence the noiſe proceeded, diſcovered me. I was now quite diſconcerted, and you may be ſure had an air not a little ridiculous, for my curioſity now appeared worthy of ſhame; and therefore caſting down my eyes, was at a loſs whether to go in or retire; but before I could determine, my aunt put an end to my embarraſſment, by calling out—'What, Felicia! is it you? 'I could be almoſt angry with you. We 'were reading your ſoul, it was talking 'to us; and here you, like a little im-'pertinent, muſt come and interrupt 'the entertainment you yourſelf was 'giving us!' At this I boldly entered the room, when they both joining in their careſſes, and I making ſome apologies, frankly confeſſed the motive of my coming, and the effect my father's goodneſs had in making me unattentive to the neceſſary precautions of being concealed. They laughed at my ingenuity; and having, at their requeſt, brought them your letters, and placed them in the order I received them, I left them to their entertainment; and going down ſtairs, took a walk with Amelia in the garden, where we for ſome time indulged the pleaſure of diſcourſing on each other's happineſs. We then made a compariſon between love and friendſhip; talked of you; and, in ſhort, were very merry with your expedient for promoting my felicity.

O Madam! when our minds, after a dreadful ſtorm that has threatened the wreck of all that is moſt dear and valuable, perceive themſelves entirely at eaſe, and wafted by the chearful gale of every pleaſing paſſion, we find new charms in all around us; a thouſand opening joys, that would otherwiſe paſs unheeded, break in upon our ſouls, and contribute to heighten our ſatisfaction; we have a quicker taſte for every new acceſſion of delight; and filled with that complacency, which makes us look upon every thing with a ſmile, every object in return ſeems to ſmile upon us. And while we are in this ſituation, not only friendſhip and love wrap the mind in the moſt pure etherial delights, but the glittering ſunbeams, the balmy breeze, the verdant groves, and all the laviſh bounty of nature, give us a ſenſible pleaſure. O how ſweet are the delights which Heaven has

thus

thus prepared for mortals! But how much more exquisite are the charms of innocence and conscious virtue, which give a pleasing relish to all these natural beauties! Affliction and distress, inrankling care, and all the painful bitter gush of grief, the darksome shades of Providence! like the clouds and storms of Nature, roaring round the high-raised mountain, and echoing with a horrid yell through all her distant caverns, serve to beautify the variegated scene, and heighten the glow of her returning smiles. Our tears, "that rain of eyes," swell the humane blossom; the kindly shower cherishes the hidden seeds of virtue, opens the lovely foliage, and with the next returning sun the fresh budding graces stand confessed. But to return from this long digression, which I hope you will think not altogether impertinent.

At dinner I had the pleasure of Lucius's company, a happiness I now enjoy every day; when I took notice that my father, who could not yet have read half my letters, behaved with a peculiar complaisance, and treated him with a respect I had never observed before: and indeed, if his esteem and affection for Lucius increases, as it has done since our grand reconciliation, he may possibly be in greater haste to compleat our union than I desire he should be; for, between you and I, I begin to grow a coward, and am a little afraid of entering into the awful, aukward state, from whence, you know, as from the regions of death, there is no return. However, your example, and that of Amelia's, I don't doubt, will give me the courage necessary to go through the solemn ceremony with a pretty good grace. But I find my happiness makes me grow lazy; and as I have nothing now very material to add, shall conclude, yours, &c.

FELICIA.

LETTER XXIII.

DEAR MADAM,

MY father's affection for Lucius is now arisen to such a height, that I hardly know whether he or I have the greater share in his heart; they are become almost inseparable, and are united in a friendship that appears very extraordinary in persons between whom there is such a wide difference with respect to age. He is perpetually at our house, and the company of the lover is pretty equally shared between the happy father and the still more happy daughter. Methinks this indulgent parent is more lavish of his caresses to me than usual; he is continually approving my choice, and giving me instructions to regulate my conduct by such rules as, he says, will render my felicity compleat. He has read to me several Spectators on this subject, to which he has subjoined many observations that have fallen within his own notice. And I assure you, Madam, it shall be my care to put all his wise maxims in practice. To study our own happiness, and that of those we love, is an affair of the utmost consequence; nor can we take too much pains in the noble employment, which is at once both our duty, our honour, and the source of the most solid and lasting joys. My soul is too delicate, and my tenderness for the amiable Lucius too sublime, to suffer me to think without pain on those little jars, those petty quarrels, which interrupt the felicity of some of the most happy pairs, and sometimes make breaches dreadfully fatal to their future repose. They are upon their guard as to things that seem of importance; but while their minds lie open to trifles, those trifles soon become affairs of the utmost consequence. To these little incidents we are continually exposed; and therefore, as my father says, they are much more to be feared than those that at first view appear of the greatest moment. However, the task which he hath inculcated cannot be very displeasing, since all his rules are perfectly agreeable to my inclinations, and only consist of such maxims as must, if observed, perpetuate our mutual felicity. O my dear friend! tell me—for you know—if there can be greater pleasure than that which results from the reflection of pleasing a person dearer, infinitely dearer to us, than ourselves! The grateful look, the kindling glance, the expressive glow of tender fondness, silently shot from the thankful eye—O, can there be a greater reward, to soften the charming toil, if that can be called a toil that will gladden the heart we love? For this I will read and study, to enrich my mind; for this I will dress; for this I will plot new arts to please; while virtue, innocence, and truth, shall lead the way,

and

and mark my path to lasting bliss. What delight the distant prospect beams upon my soul! My Lucius! my husband! my friend! Dear epithets! enchanting sounds!—sounds swelling with every thrilling joy! O, All-gracious Being! may my abilities be equal to the ardor of my soul! May the wife be lost in the friend; the soft, the tender, the generous friend!

These last thoughts arise in my mind whenever I entertain myself with the grateful subject of my father's instructions; but the pleasure I may be supposed to receive from these resolutions is extremely damped by abundance of intruding fears that dash my joy with a mixture of bitterness; I tremble lest, in the unguarded moments of my life, I should drop the guard I resolve to keep over my temper; lest I should forget to please, or lose the power of doing it. Thoughts that are always attended with pain.

You see what a fond, unfashionable creature, I am grown; but as your ladyship has given me some reason to believe that you are not less weak than myself, I boldly brave your satire; so that if you make merry with me on this occasion, I shall freely join in the laugh.

My happiness is now so great, that there seems nothing wanting but the consideration of it's being perpetual; to render it compleat. Nor does Amelia's appear less exquisite than mine; we are surrounded with every laughing delight, every social endearment. The congratulations of our friends, the caresses of our parents, the tenderness of our lovers, and the pleasing sympathy in each other's felicity, all contribute to heighten our joy; while rapture itself grows more pleasing, by settling into a serene and most charming tranquillity. Every thing is prepared for the ceremony that is to unite us for ever to the dearest persons on earth; and next Thursday Amelia and I are to be hailed under the title of Brides, and initiated into the dignified state of venerable Matrons. And, between you and I, Madam, we both heartily wish these solemn doings over, for really they have something terrible in them that frights at a distance.

Thus far, Madam, I had written yesterday; at which time I had no other care than how to render Lucius and myself as happy as possible, except some little intruding thoughts of the awkward appearance I should make at church, and those natural inquietudes which are apt to perplex the mind upon the view of an important change in our circumstances; all which were counterbalanced by abundance of most charming reflections. But the scene soon changed. Alas! what is life, but a perpetual round of vexations and disappointments! a rapid succession of intermingled pleasures and pains! These cares and these delightful thoughts soon vanished, they gave place to other cares of a more bitter kind, unmixed with the least thought that could alleviate their force, or still the tumult of my troubled mind.

Yesterday we had Mellifont's company as usual. The time passed away very agreeably; and though I had not seen Lucius all the preceding day, I felt little uneasiness on account of his absence. I knew if he was ill I should have heard from him, and therefore did not question but he was detained by some extraordinary business, which would be no sooner finished than I should see him again, with a satisfaction that would be greatly increased by our being deprived for a short time of each other's company. Thus, while anticipating the eagerness with which I fancied he would fly to me, the pleasure I should observe in his countenance, and the tender apologies he would doubtless make on this occasion, I recompensed myself for the loss of a present gratification, with the pleasing thoughts of the future: though Mellifont, Amelia, and even my aunt, could not help censuring him a little severely, while I took his part with a good deal of vivacity, and let them know that I did not think I had the least reason to be offended.

However, in the evening, I had the satisfaction of seeing him enter the court. My heart bounded with joy, and a sudden thrill of delight darted through every vein. He entered the room, he saluted me, but it was with such a kind of cold restraint, as at once alarmed and pierced my soul. I knew not what to think, nor how to behave. I felt an emotion which I know not how to describe, a painful flutter of spirits; when having made a short apology, by saying he had been detained by some affairs of the utmost consequence, he took his seat, and joined in the conversation, with a distraction that was too visible for me

not

not to take particular notice of it, while methought he had an air of constraint that seemed quite unnatural to him. He avoided looking at me; and whenever his eyes chanced to meet mine, he suddenly cast them down. O what could I think! could I imagine that he was grown perfidious, and that I had lost my empire over his heart? No, I could not believe it; I could not entertain a thought so injurious to the fair idea I had conceived of his truth and goodness. However, all that engaging frankness, which had hitherto appeared on his countenance, was vanished, and I was ignorant of the cause. 'Some strange 'event,' thought I, 'must have happened, in which I am greatly interested.' I was ready to imagine any thing, rather than that Lucius, my dear, dear Lucius, could be false.

At last, Mellifont and Amelia leaving the room, my aunt soon followed, and we were left together, without the interruption of company; a situation which I had longed for ever since I observed this restraint in his behaviour, though his coldness would not suffer me to take any measures to obtain this satisfaction. His eyes now softened, while drooping with some secret care, every feature had an air of reluctant languishment. His tenderness had a mixture of fear and compassion, and methought he even seemed to dread my reproaches. We both continued silent; his eyes were steadily fixed on mine. A sigh, a tear, escaped him. He held down his head, to stifle his sighs, to hide his tears. O how nearly did they touch me! what a violent emotion did they raise in my breast! my heart throbbed; a pang of grief and soft surprize struck through my soul. I longed to know the cause of what I saw, yet dreaded to ask it. When at last breaking silence—'O my dear Lucius,' cried I, unable to restrain my tears, 'tell 'me, for Heaven's sake, tell me what is 'the matter, what is it that disturbs 'you? I must know it. Have you a 'care that I have not a right to share 'with you? Let me know what dread'ful misfortune it is that gives you this 'pain. Indeed, if I can, I will remove 'it.' At this I sighed and wiped my eyes; while he, with his still fixed on the floor, echoed back my sighs; when, as if struggling to conquer the glut of sorrow which choaked up his voice—'O 'my Felicia! my dear, my lovely Fe'licia!' said he, 'let me persuade you 'to forget me; I will never involve you 'in the miseries of our unhappy fa'mily.'—'What do you mean?' cried I, hastily interrupting him, and scarce able to believe my ears. 'I don't under'stand you.'— Alas! my dear,' rejoined he, in a sorrowful tone; 'you cannot 'be mine, I don't deserve——' 'How!' interrupted I again, stunned at his words; but immediately my pride helping me to recollect myself, I coldly rejoined, 'Well, Sir, just as you please.'

Here I was going to fling out of the room, when a sudden glance in a moment dispelled my indignation; while Love, with all it's humbling powers, took entire possession of my soul. I saw him with his eyes greedily fixed on me; they overflowed with a melting softness, and at the same time sparkling through the crystal swell with awful dignity, seemed to express some great, some hidden purpose. Every degree of confusion was vanished, not the least tincture of shame remained. His countenance had an air of open frankness, and no other traces were visible there but those of perfect tenderness and soft regret. What could I now think? or what could I say? I perceived that there was some extraordinary cause that forced him to behave in this manner; I perceived (or at least I thought I did) that it was with reluctance he struggled against his love, and endeavoured to forget me; yet I flattered myself, that if I did but know the motive to this painful task, I should be able to give him some relief, and perhaps let him see, that there was no occasion for such a victory over his passions; yet, however glad I should have been to have heard his reasons, I had still too much pride to enquire into them; the shame of meanly stooping to desire to be informed of these particulars shocked me immediately; I saw plainly, that this would appear too forward, and too evidently express the difficulty I should have to overcome my tenderness.

These reflections, which glanced through my mind in a moment, kept me silent, and prevented my asking to be informed of what I impatiently longed to hear; when finding me still continue speechless—'You wonder, my dear,' said Lucius, 'and are at a loss to find 'arguments to excuse my behaviour; 'but, could I prefer my own happiness 'to yours, I might still be as blest as I

'could wish; as blest as the most high-'wrought imagination can conceive: I 'might barbarously consult my own 'felicity to the prejudice of your hap-'pineſs and future peace of mind. But 'I love you more dearly than life, and 'therefore can never consent to involve 'you in my misfortunes. I will never 'be guilty of such baseneſs. O my dear 'Felicia! call not this a want of affec-'tion; rather think it the triumph of the 'most perfect love, the strongest proof 'of the most generous disinterestedneſs. 'But what will this cost me? In losing 'you, I abandon every earthly joy—I 'bid adieu to the most pleasing prospects, 'to the enchanting sweets of the most 'pure and virtuous—— To see you 'no more!'

At this moment my aunt's return put a stop to this moving discourse; when Lucius and I endeavouring to compose our countenances, he enquired if my father would return that evening, for he had been out all day; and being told he would, he promised to come the next morning early, to pay him his respects, and immediately left us.

In this situation I am at present. I form a thousand conjectures, each of which perhaps is groundleſs; and notwithstanding all my endeavours to penetrate the cause of this sudden change, am as much in the dark as ever. However, I must believe him sincere, and therefore cannot suspect that he wants a pretence to break his engagements. No, I am sure he tenderly loves me; it would be criminal to doubt it. But a few hours more will now discover the whole affair; till when at least I shall be your ladyship's most unhappy friend,

FELICIA.

P. S. The uneasy torment of suspence not allowing me to sleep, I could not think of any expedient to pass away the tedious interval till Lucius's return, so agreeably as in opening my heart to you: I therefore arose two hours before the rest of the family, and employed my time in writing you the above.

LETTER XXIV.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I NOW send you two letters together, the dates of which will tell you in what order they are to be read. In the first you find me plunged into fresh anxiety, into all the pains of disappointed love. In this you will see the cause of this mighty change, a great mind struggling between love and generosity.

About an hour after I had concluded the other letter, a servant came to tell me that breakfast was ready. I went down with a mind extremely perplexed; when, in spite of all my endeavours to assume an air of ease and gaiety, they perceived my disorder; but instead of enquiring into the reason of it, as I expected, only strove to divert my pensive thoughtfulneſs, by turning it into ridicule. At last, however, Lucius appeared, and by his presence put an end to their unseasonable mirth, which began to grow extremely painful. Breakfast was now over, and the dear youth desiring my father and I to favour him with our company, went with us into a room, where we had no reason to fear being disturbed; and having taken our seats, with eyes in which were intermingled an air of dignity, with the soft languishment of love, he cast a glance at me, and then fixing them on my father—'Sir,' cried he, 'I am now come 'to thank you for your unmerited good-'neſs; and, by an ingenuous confession 'of my circumstances, to let you see, 'that I am unworthy of the happineſs 'of possessing your daughter. Nay, 'Sir,' continued he, seeing him look astonished, 'I don't wonder at your be-'ing startled at an address of this na-'ture; but since I cannot now marry 'her with honour, I must do you and 'her the justice to decline it.'

Struck dumb with surprize, my father at first seemed incapable of making a reply; he rivetted his eyes upon Lucius, who at the same time cast his eyes to the floor; his colour came and went, he knit his brows, while his countenance expressed a confused mixture of vexation, anger, and disappointment; when, at last, seeming to collect his scattered thoughts, 'What can this mean?' cried he; 'I 'desire you would explain yourself. 'What disadvantage can there be in 'your circumstances, that you ought not 'to have mentioned before? It was a 'base and ungenerous part to endeavour 'to engage my daughter's affections, 'and thus to carry things to the last ex-'tremity, when you knew you could 'not marry her with honour; and I 'don't doubt, but she will resent such 'treatment

'treatment as she ought. She will regard your conduct as an insult to humanity, and as an affront that deserves only to be answered with contempt.'

Though this was expressed with all the bitterness of resentment, in his voice and air, yet it appeared to make but little impression on Lucius; only a modest, guiltless blush, flashed in his cheek, which seemed to arise from the indignant pride of injured innocence; when finding that my father, by his silence, waited for his answer—'I am sorry, Sir,' said he, in a bold and manly tone, 'to 'find you entertain so ill an opinion of 'me; but were I that ungrateful wretch 'you think me, I should deserve even 'greater reproaches than those you are 'pleased to load me with; Felicia's merit 'would then justify this warmth in an 'indulgent father: but I beg you would 'do me the justice to hear me; and I 'don't doubt but that, notwithstanding 'I may appear a more unequal match 'than ever, you will still think I deserve 'a place in your esteem. My misfortunes call for pity, and not resentment. I have chosen to be unhappy 'rather than to see my father exposed to 'the miseries of a prison. I have lost 'Felicia to save my father! Think, 'Sir, what a son must feel at the very 'thought of seeing a person whom nature, whom ten thousand obligations 'has bound him to love and revere, in 'a gaol, in a dark, unwholesome prison, 'excluded from the chearful face of 'man, lingering out a wretched being in 'penury, while he enjoyed—— O! it 'is too much; affluence in such circumstances would be a curse, while nature would extinguish all the delight 'of love, and embitter it's most pleasing 'sweets. 'Tis true, I might have concealed my giving up my fortune to 'procure his liberty. I *might* have done 'it; and had I been base enough to injure your goodness, I *had* done it. I 'might in this case have confided in 'the generosity of Felicia's mind, who 'after our union might have excused 'my deceiving her, and have kept it a 'secret. But I could neither resolve to 'marry her in such wretched circumstances, nor to impose upon you. I 'had yesterday morning five thousand 'pounds; I have now but two, a miserable pittance to support the exigence 'of a family, born above the inconvenience of low life! for to this use it 'must be applied. Alas! what inconveniences shall we labour under! But 'what are these inconveniences, to 'the ten thousand times more painful 'shock of the rich man's scorn, the 'indignant leer, the contemptuous 'taunts and shrugs of the wealthy fool, 'the dread of needy creditors! These, 'even at a distance, strike terror through 'the soul, and damp the generous pride 'of upright virtue. But is a wretch like 'this a proper match for the lovely, the 'wealthy Felicia? No, you cannot, and 'I ought not to think it. Instead of 'an estate, shall I bring her the necessities of an unhappy family? Forbid 'it Heaven! forbid it love! Can I in 'these circumstances ungratefully impose on that generosity that made you 'overlook the disparity of our fortune, 'which was too great before? No, no, 'Sir; you must no longer think of me 'as your son, nor I of her as the dear 'companion of my life. The consciousness of having now done my duty, in 'resigning all my pretensions, will help 'me to support her loss—I already feel 'it will. Do you then teach her to forget me. Though I shall see her no 'more, she shall have my prayers, and 'all my fondest wishes. Good God! 'whatever I suffer, may Felicia at least 'be happy!'

O! Madam, had you but seen with what a flood of passion this speech was uttered, you would—I am sure you would have been extremely moved. He wept—and sure never did tears look so graceful on a manly cheek before! My father wept too, and I faster than them both; while he pursued, without interruption, the noble dictates of his generous heart, bursting into the incoherent language of tender distress. But I must be more particular with respect to my father: for Lucius had hardly began this apology, when the resentment which reddened in his cheek began insensibly to vanish; his features, before swelled with indignation, now sunk imperceptibly, and left only the soft traces of pity, blended with a wonder that seemed to arise amidst those generous sentiments which elevate the soul above itself. He appeared interested in every word the dear engaging youth uttered; nor did the broken sighs, which frequently disjointed them, the groans of his throbbing heart, the trembling accent of his voice, or the least change in his countenance,

seem to escape his notice. I saw it did not—with a secret joy I saw it; and rejoiced in the humanity of his heart, which made him pity the noble distress of my lover, at this moment more dear than ever. Never did the high-wrought images of even a fictitious tale present a scene so moving as this would have been to an indifferent spectator; the most insensible breast must sure have melted into softness, the dryest eye have gushed into tears.

After Lucius had finished, there remained a silence which lasted near a minute—an awful, tender silence, which was only interrupted by a few heaving sighs; when at last my father smiling, with an expressive affection in his look—'Indeed, Sir,' said he, 'I have been too 'hasty; you deserve to be pitied: but 'what strange magick do you find to 'soften me thus? I profess I have not 'shed so many tears these eighteen years; 'never since I lost Felicia's mother, my 'dear Elmira But I beg you would 'do me the favour, my friend,' added he, 'to give me the particulars of this 'affecting story.'

'Oh! Sir,' resumed my dear Lucius, 'you have a right to demand every thing 'from me: and though no mercenary 'view can tempt me to betray Felicia 'into ruin; though I have not the least 'distant hope of ever obtaining her by 'this confession, which can have no 'other effect than to convince you that 'Heaven never designed her for me; the 'respect I owe you, and the desire I 'have to appear still worthy of your 'friendship, will make me give you all 'the satisfaction you can desire. Two 'days ago, as I was preparing to pay 'this lovely maid a visit, a messenger 'from my father, who went out pretty 'early that morning, brought me a 'note, by which I was informed that he 'was under an arrest from one of his 'principal creditors. What could I do, 'but instantly fly to him! I found him 'in the house of one of our dependants, 'with no other company than the officers who deprived him of his liberty. 'He received me with an air of dejected 'sadness; while his attendants, stepping to the door, left me at liberty to 'indulge the torturing anguish of my 'heart, by endeavouring to give him 'the comfort I wanted myself. "Oh "Lucius!" said he, seeing me enter, "you see your father a prisoner!" This 'was all he could say, before I sprung 'into his arms. I could not speak to 'him: we both seated ourselves on a 'bench near the table; when having cast 'his eyes upon me again, with an air 'of the deepest melancholy and distress, 'he gave me a particular account of the 'situation of his affairs; an account 'that filled my mind with distraction, 'yet in a great measure put a stop to 'that torturing hurry, that flutter of 'spirits, with which I had before cast 'about my thoughts to give him relief; 'since I was now sensible that there was 'but one way to save him, and that, at 'first view gave the most violent shock 'to my soul. Oh! Sir, how hard, how intolerably hard it is to root out of the heart 'a passion like mine! You, Madam,' continued he, looking at me, 'appeared 'in that moment more charming than 'ever; ten thousand pleasing, distracting ideas, crouded upon my mind, 'and I overwhelmed my senses in a mazy 'whirl of giddiness. My reason seemed deserting, while my breast was 'torn between love and nature, between 'duty and the tender—too tender softness that melts, and charms, and swallows up the soul. Good God! what 'did I feel! The sigh, the tear, the unkind reproach from my dear Felicia, 'and all the distraction of her bosom, 'was felt with a double emphasis in 'mine: but I soon came to a resolution; 'the manner in which my father concluded the painful story of the situation 'of his affairs, fixed my wavering 'thoughts, called in my reason, and 'pleaded in his look, his air, his words, 'so strongly for duty, that it was almost impossible to resist it's impulses. "O Lucius!" said he, in a most distressful tone, "You see I can have "no prospect of relief—No; I have not "the least hope, the least glimmering "hope, of ever procuring my liberty." 'Here pressing my hand, and giving 'me a look painfully affectionate—"It "is a melancholy thought," continued 'he; "the dreary horrors of a prison "are extremely shocking; they disarm "my resolutions, and make a coward "of me! But I have nobody to reproach but myself. To be buried "alive, to be for ever deprived of that "wholesome air, which the meanest "slaves breathe at liberty! Nay, don't "look so tenderly upon me!" continued he, pressing my hand again; and 'then

' then looking at me, with the utmoſt
' exceſs of paternal affection, he added,
" Will you not come to ſee me?" I
' could bear no more: theſe laſt words
' pierced through my ſoul. " Don't,
" pray don't, Sir, diſtract me with theſe
" dreadful thoughts," interrupted I;
" you ſhall not go to priſon—I am re-
" ſolved you ſhan't."—" What do you
" mean?" returned he; " I muſt. I
" have no friend to aſſiſt me."—" What
" am I then?" cried I; " you ſhall not,
" if my life or fortune can prevent it.
" I will not, I cannot ſee you ſo wretch-
" ed!"—" Mention it no more," re
' turned he, " I won't hear of ſuch a
" propoſal. Your whole fortune would
" ſcarcely be ſufficient. No, no; you
" ſhan't ruin yourſelf for me. I will
" not purchaſe my liberty at ſo dear a
" price as your happineſs. Think what
" it is you propoſe; think of Felicia.
" Ah! that name will ſurely call you
" back to reaſon; you need but conſult
" your own heart to find that it is ſhe,
" not I, that muſt render you happy.
" Leave me then to the miſeries I have
" brought upon myſelf. Death will
" ſoon put an end to them all. But O!
" how painful is this ſituation, in which
" death, ſo terrible to nature, is my
" only relief! A relief do I call it?
" Would it be a relief to me? No, I
" fear not; there is ſomething after
" death more dreadful than death it-
" ſelf, more terrible than all I ſuffer.
" O how happy is the virtuous man to
" whom the grim monſter appears with
" an angel's face, with the ſmiles of
" immortal beauty! To me it is covered
" with a dreary gloom that ſhoots terror
" through my ſoul! But when you are
" happy, Lucius, think of me; viſit
" me in my grave, my priſon."—" O
" my father! my dear, dear father!"
' cried I, interrupting him again,
" Why will you not hear me? Why
" do you give way to ſuch cruel
" thoughts? Shall I not have the li-
" berty of diſpoſing of my own? I have
" already thought of what I loſe in for-
" ſaking the gentle Felicia. I know
" my felicity is interwoven with hers.
" I know that our marriage, on which
" the happineſs of my life depends, will
" never be concluded, yet I have made
" my choice. There is ſomething ſo
" horrible in the apprehenſions of ſeeing
" you a priſoner, that I cannot bear to
" think of it. There are no circum-
" ſtances, in which ſuch a misfortune
" to you would not render me wretched.
" Are you not my father, and ſhall
" not nature plead for you? Do you
" think me a ſon, and yet believe me
" capable of ſtruggling againſt my
" duty?—my duty to my father?—a
" father from whom I have received
" numberleſs obligations, that call for
" returns of gratitude and love? Think
" what my mother will feel, when ſhe
" hears of your diſtreſs; and though I
" have not the power to ſhake your re-
" ſolutions by my entreaties to accept
" of what I offer you, let her tears, let
" her deſpair, touch your heart. Marilla
" too will be diſtracted with grief; and
" I know her ſo well, that were ſhe of
" age, ſhe would gladly make you the
" ſame offer that I do now. Indeed,
" Sir, we can none of us feel more
" miſery than in ſeeing you miſerable."
—" Good God!" cried my father,
' with uplifted hands, " teach me how
" to act. Never did my conduct, in
" my calmeſt intervals of reflection,
" appear ſo black as it does now. O
" Lucius! I am aſhamed of thinking
" how I have injured you. Your kind-
" neſs is more inſupportable than all
" my ſufferings. How ſeverely does
" all this goodneſs reproach me! this
" undeſerved goodneſs! It touches me
" to the quick; it makes a monſter of
" me!"—" I beg pardon, Sir," re-
' plied I, " if I have done any thing to
" occaſion theſe cruel reflections. In
" ſerving you I only do my duty."—
" But ah! it is a painful duty," inter-
' rupted he; " I know it is; your for-
" tune is your ſmalleſt loſs. If I accept
" of it, I deprive you of Felicia's for-
" tune too; and what is infinitely worſe
" to a mind like yours, I deprive you
" of Felicia! I might have given you a
" ſplendid eſtate; but, inſtead of that,
" to—— O! how unlike a father, who,
" inſtead of a curſe, ought to be a bleſ-
" ſing to his family! My conduct has
" been an outrage againſt nature, a
" violation of the deareſt privileges of a
" parent; I have forgot the obligations
" of the huſband, the father, and the
" friend. Thy mother too! How miſer-
" able have I made her! I have been
" the ruin of all who have loved me;
" the ruin of my wife and children—
" the ruin of thee! Sad effect of vice!

' how

" how dearly do I pay for my folly and " madneſs!"

Here he pauſed; and, I dare ſay, it is not difficult, Madam, for you to imagine the tender, the generous, the noble ſentiments, the relation of this affecting conteſt produced. Methought there was ſomething ſo heroick, ſo dutiful, and ſo diſintereſted, in this part of his behaviour, that I could not help ſecretly applauding him. But now my father let me ſee that he was of the ſame opinion as myſelf, by openly diſcovering his ſentiments: for Lucius no ſooner gave him leave to ſpeak, by a pauſe in which he ſeemed to recollect himſelf, than my father, as if eager to put him out of his pain, took hold of his hand, and giving it an affectionate ſhake—'Generous 'youth,' cried he, 'this was nobly 'done! You are more my ſon than 'ever. I ſhall think myſelf happy in 'being allied to a perſon of ſuch worth. 'How greatly do theſe tears become 'you! this ſoft adoption of another's 'ſorrow: this exceſs of humanity, which 'the ſavage mind cannot (or at leaſt will 'not) feel, is the trueſt mark to know 'the brave, the generous heart by. Actions like theſe give a perfect inſight 'into characters; and while they add a 'dignity to the higheſt ſtations, they 'ſpread a luſtre that can never be equal'ed by all the pride of wealth, the pomp 'of titles, or the falſe glitter of ſucceſsful ambition. Dear Lucius! how 'happy will my daughter be in ſo wor'thy a huſband!'

This was uttered in that peculiar tone in which we always expreſs ourſelves, when the full heart, burthened under it's joy, breaks forth into an unreſtrained tranſport, into elevated ſurprize and generous affection. While he ſpoke, the tears ſtarted afreſh into his eyes, and added an endearing tenderneſs to the ſmile of gladneſs which enlivened his countenance. His ſoul beamed in his looks, and diſcovered a mind ſoftened, delighted, and raiſed above itſelf; while I dwelt upon each word he uttered, and with a moſt charming extaſy aſſented to the juſtice of his praiſes. As to Lucius, he ſeemed all this while as if awaking from a troubleſome dream; while ſurprize, gratitude, and a modeſt joy, diſperſed the clouds of deſpair which hung on his brow. He looked at my father, he looked at me: the ſame paſſions were viſible in both our faces, only I fancy mine had an air of greater ſoftneſs. He then turned his eyes again to my father, and preſſing his hand—'I am amazed, 'Sir,' cried he: 'What can this good'neſs mean? Can you really propoſe to 'marry Felicia to a perſon without a 'fortune? to one ſunk into indigence? 'Sure it is impoſſible! Have you forgot 'that our family depends upon my ſup'port? and can you reſolve that Felicia's 'eſtate, inſtead of being augmented by 'her marriage, ſhould be applied to 'remove foreign cares, and foreign 'wants?'

'Come, come, Lucius,' returned my father, ſmiling, 'don't exaggerate the 'diſadvantages of your circumſtances. 'This laſt inſtance of filial piety ſhews 'a greatneſs of ſoul, that not only fills 'me with ſurprize, but extremely en'dears you to me. The better I know 'you, the more I admire your virtue; 'and, to be as little behind you as poſ'ſible in point of generoſity, I promiſe 'not only to conſult your felicity, but 'the happineſs of all that are dear to 'you. But pray proceed; for I long 'to know the concluſion of theſe affect'ing incidents.'

'Dear Sir,' cried the engaging youth, with a ſparkling joy ſwelling into rapture; 'dear Sir, teach me how to ac'knowledge your goodneſs; I would be 'grateful, but yet cannot expreſs my 'gratitude. My heart feels it all; feels 'it too ſenſibly to be expreſſed. O my 'dear, my lovely Felicia!' cried he, ariſing haſtily, running to me, and giving me an eager, affectionate embrace; while my father could not forbear laughing at this natural tranſport, this ſudden impulſe of affection; nor could I help being extremely delighted with it. With extaſy he preſſed my hand to his boſom; his eyes ſpoke unutterable things. But having indulged for near a minute this ſudden tranſport of joy, he returned to his chair, and concluded the ſtory of his father's misfortunes; but he neither ſufficiently entered into the ſubject, nor dwelt, as before, upon the moſt melting circumſtances. His own paſt ſorrow and his father's were ſwallowed up by the joy of the preſent moment. He told us that, after many arguments, his father at laſt conſented to his propoſal, but not without the ſevereſt reproaches upon the madneſs of his own conduct. His creditors

creditors were ſent for; when offering a handſome compoſition, which was readily accepted, their affairs were concluded the next day: and, in ſhort, that his misfortune, with the tenderneſs of Sophronia and Marilla, had wrought the moſt happy change in his conduct; a circumſtance which, as it gave Lucius the higheſt pleaſure, he mentioned with peculiar ſatisfaction.

As ſoon as he had done, my father renewed the friendly proofs he had given him of his affection, and promiſed to uſe his endeavours to make us as happy as poſſible; ſo that, before dinner, we were more firmly united than ever. What a delightful change in our affairs! In two days more, my circumſtances and manner of life will be changed; ſo that, when I write next, you will find me in a different claſs of mortals: but in whatever ſtate I may be, if you do me juſtice, you will believe me to be unalterably yours,

FELICIA.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

FELICIA TO CHARLOTTE.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

LETTER XXV.

YOU wonder, Madam, at my ſilence; but the continual perſecution of a number of viſitors has, for ſome time paſt, deprived me of every opportunity of retirement: ſo that, unleſs I could have found in my heart to have ſent you a letter, with only *Madam*, at the top; *I am married*, a little lower; and *your humble ſervant*, at the bottom; I was indiſpenſably obliged to defer writing till I could find leiſure to be more particular.

My ſtory, Madam, is now finiſhed: I have been married theſe three weeks; and, from the ſerene tranquil ſtate I am in at preſent, you have no reaſon to expect any more romantick adventures. I have nothing now to do with the affecting ſcenes of fond diſtreſs, the pangs of jealouſy, or the fears of incurring a father's diſpleaſure. My life begins to move on in an even ſtream, my paſſions are all huſhed into a ſweet ſerenity: regularity and order, peace and tranquillity, have taken up their reſidence in our happy dwelling. Can I give you, my dear friend, a more perfect picture of the higheſt degree of conjugal felicity, or repreſent a happineſs more intenſely charming? It is true, my huſband—O the aukward name!—has no right honourable titles to grace my ſtory, and give a dignity to my newly-acquired ſtation; but this is an honour that I can freely reſign to you without the leaſt degree of envy; nor will your ladyſhip think me ſtupid, though I tell you, that I never in my life had an ambition of this kind. Theſe all-potent words, theſe raviſhing ſounds of dignity, theſe pompous ſyllables, ſo full of nameleſs charms, after which ſo many ſigh and languiſh in vain, appear of no moment: and I am as content with the homely title of Mrs. *Manly*, as any other perſon can be with the more diſtinguiſhed epithet of *my Lady*. But whither am I rambling? Don't you think matrimony has turned my brain? I have been preaching ſo long upon my humility, that I had almoſt forgot I was to give you an account of my affairs. To return, then, at laſt, to my ſtory.

The day before I was united to my dear Lucius, by thoſe indiſſoluble bonds which render our happineſs as ſecure as our lives, his father came to pay us a viſit. We received him with that deference which is due to ſo near a relation; while his reformation greatly heightened the reſpect my father thought himſelf obliged to pay him. And indeed, whatever follies he had formerly been guilty of, he did not at this time want any qualification to recommend him to the eſteem of a good man; for his ſentiments now ſhewed that he deſerved it. He is really a gentleman of fine ſenſe, of an eaſy agreeable addreſs, and one that perfectly knows the world; nor does he ſeem to have wanted any natural advantage for making a ſhining figure in it. As all my father's prejudices were now removed, they ſoon grew intimate; and Mr. Manly expreſſed his acknowledgments for my father's generoſity to his ſon, with all the gratitude that could be inſpired by the tender overflowings of

paternal affection; while my father returned his compliments with an air of the utmost complacence and satisfaction. How much does a man of fine sense lose by his vices! His abilities, which raise him above his neighbours, are either entirely suspended, or render him more ingeniously infamous, more generally hated and despised; but he is no sooner reformed, than, if his reason is not impaired by brutal indulgence, and a continued debauch—which, alas! is often the case—his new-recovered virtues, polished by repentance, blaze out with a double lustre and receive unutterable graces from the sudden sublimity of his conceptions.

Mr. Manly's acknowledgments were, however, too grave for the present situation of our affairs, and affected us, as well as himself, too much, for us to suffer him to proceed. We, therefore, as soon as possible, gave a turn to this part of the conversation; and Lucius, Mellifont, and Amelia, entering the room immediately after, prevented it's being resumed, and, at the same time, recovered that chearfulness which had been interrupted by this too tender subject. The countenances of all our friends had an air of gaiety, which broke out into decent mirth; while Amelia and I were, by far, the dullest part of the company. They at last retired; when my good friend attending me to my chamber, and seating herself by me—'How 'is it with you, Felicia?' said she, smiling. 'I must confess myself a sad fool; 'for though no conversation could possibly be more engaging than that in 'which we have spent the day, I have 'wished a thousand times for an opportunity of being alone. Methought I 'wanted to indulge at leisure my own thoughts; though, I can assure you, they were none of the most agreeable 'My spirits have been strangely oppressed; and, notwithstanding my endeavouring to join in the discourse, I 'have been every moment at church repeating after the parson, and thinking what a silly awkward figure I shall 'make there to-morrow. Bless me! 'what a coward am I grown! I shall 'certainly behave like a natural.'—'O, never mind it,' replied I, with a malicious pleasure, at finding her as weak as myself; 'depend upon it, I shall 'keep you in countenance.'—'I am so 'terrified at the solemnity of the ceremony, that I heartily wish it was over. 'I dread it as something mighty formidable, and can hardly think of it without trembling.'—'But suppose now,' added I, 'we should take the pains to 'read it over together?'—'Agreed,' replied she, running into my closet, and returning immediately with my prayer-book: 'Come, let us begin,' added she, 'it will be more familiar to us to-morrow.' Here we began, making our remarks as we proceeded. In short, we read over the whole ceremonial with the utmost attention; which, as we lengthened it out with abundance of comments, and little disputes upon some particulars which we did not understand, took up a considerable time.

Having now gratified our curiosity, we wished each other a good night, and Amelia left me; but she was hardly out of my room, when returning with a smile on her countenance—'I am come,' said she, 'to ask your consent to let me 'lie with you. I am persuaded, that 'we are neither of us in a disposition to 'give way to sleep. The hours would 'pass on very heavily, were we alone; 'let us then divert ourselves as agreeably 'as we can.'—'With all my heart, my 'dear,' said I, extremely pleased with her proposal: 'we will indulge our re-'flections with the greatest freedom.'

Upon this we undressed, and went to bed. But I will not trouble your ladyship with the various topicks of our discourse; it is sufficient to say, that we talked till morning, when, shaking off the drowsiness that then began insensibly to steal upon us, we arose; but had hardly finished the agreeable task of dressing each other, when somebody rapping softly at the door, Amelia opened it, and our two lovers appeared. They saluted us with an air of transport; telling us, that as they had seen us at the window, they could not forbear coming to wish us joy on the arrival of this happy morning. 'This, my dear,' said Lucius, 'is the day from whence I shall date 'the completion of my happiness; a 'day, that, I hope, we shall neither of 'us ever think of without delight. O 'my Felicia! how happy are you go-'ing to make me!' Here he gently pressed my hand, and gave me a look so extremely tender, that I could not help banishing every impertinent thought, to share in his transport; I even returned the charming pressure, and squeezed his hand,

hand, with a freedom I had never indulged before. 'Sure,' said I, 'this 'must be a happy union, where both 'so ardently wish to promote each other's 'felicity!'—'O my dear!' cried he, in an extasy, 'how shall I merit this sweet 'excess of goodness!'

Mellifont, I suppose, was entertaining Amelia in the same passionate strain; but I was not at leisure to attend either to their words or behaviour; however, I remember that they both looked extremely pleased. We went down to breakfast; when Mr. Manly and my father joined with my aunt in the most affectionate wishes for the continuance of our happiness; at the same time letting us know that a coach was ready to carry us, as soon as we had drank our chocolate, to a small village, at a few miles distance, where a clergyman waited to join our hands.

At the mention of the coach and clergyman, my uneasiness returned. I trembled, as if afraid of the awful ceremony; while Mellifont, drawing the common prayer out of his pocket, which he had found in my room, and taken up unobserved, increased my disorder, by shewing my father in what place he found it open upon the table. This was a circumstance which created a deal of mirth among the old people; who, however, unanimously agreed that we could not have spent our time better, than in thus studying the nature of those engagements we were going to enter into: to which my aunt added—'Indeed, I think my 'niece and my daughter ought to be com-'mended, instead of being laughed at; 'for, as marriage is one of the most im-'portant steps we can take in life; since 'our happiness, both in this and a fu-'ture state, in a great measure depends 'upon it; they could not, at this time, 'have employed their thoughts on a 'more interesting subject, than the 'solemn promises by which they are go-'ing to bind themselves.'

Several other things were said upon the same subject, which took up good part of the time we were at breakfast; and we were just ready to step into the coach, when Mellifont, to my no small satisfaction, proposed our sending for the clergyman to perform the ceremony here. Lucius casting a glance at me, to see if I approved the motion, immediately seconded his friend; and, though my aunt disapproved of it, as a thing uncustomary in this part of the country, we had the happiness to carry it against her, by my father's joining on our side. We, therefore, took our seats again, and one of the coaches was sent away for the reverend gentleman.

I shall not attempt, my dear friend, to repeat the chat that filled up this interval. I was in a very odd situation; but in less than two hours time, we were informed that the coach was returned, and soon after saw the divine enter the room, accompanied by Sophronia and Marilla, who had waited for us at church. The glass having gone once round, we arose, and went into a back parlour facing the garden; I, trembling with fear, held by my father's arm, and Amelia by my aunt's; when cushions being brought in, the solemn service began. But it would be impertinent for me minutely to describe my behaviour on this occasion, which, however, was not altogether so ridiculous as I expected; only this I must say, that I repeated the words, *honour and obey*, as distinctly as the rest: nor did Amelia, any more than I, scruple to pronounce those formidable sounds. My heart readily assented to every thing: my whole soul was lost in devotion, and every faculty of it employed in the service.

You find, Madam, I am now entered into the venerable state of wedlock; but, whatever change I have undergone in my manner of life, I do myself the honour to assure you, that I was never more, than I am at present, your ladyship's sincerest friend,

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XXVI.

DEAR MADAM,

YOUR congratulations on our marriage are so very obliging, that I cannot defer my acknowledgments without deserving the imputation of ingratitude, a crime that my soul most abhors; and therefore, as I am as sensible as possible of your goodness, I embrace this first opportunity of telling you so. O my friend! what a sweet addition do your praises give to the secret applause with which I regard my happy choice! Lucius is, indeed, worthy of all you have said in his favour; his mind

is truly noble, and all his soul as much the object of my admiration as my love.

In my last, Madam, I broke off a little abruptly at the conclusion of that solemn ceremony which initiated me into a different class of mortals: but, as I have several things to relate, which, I flatter myself, may serve to amuse and entertain you, I will now resume the thread of my story.

When all was over, my heart, which had hitherto been extremely oppressed, began to beat more freely. Lucius embraced me, and, with eyes filled with a melting softness, cried—'Now, my dear, 'I may be so happy as to call you my 'wife. Dear name! may you never 'think of it without pleasure!' The rest of the company embraced us in their turn; and paid us the grateful compliments which burst from hearts struggling under an excess of affection and tender joy. Nor did Lucius's father, who had given away Amelia, appear less affected with our common happiness than mine. In short, every face glowed with satisfaction, while they strove to outdo each other in their caresses and testimonies of regard.

We now adjourned to another room, where a side-board was set with wines and fruit; when my aunt insisted upon my drinking a glass to raise my spirits, which Amelia, after my example, complied with. The clergyman, who is one of the most facetious gentlemen upon earth, told us abundance of agreeable stories, with so much humour, that he frequently set the whole company in a laugh; nor could Amelia and I forbear joining in the general mirth. We insensibly returned to ourselves; and, before dinner, were able to bear a part in the conversation. The reverend divine filled his pipe, had a tankard of old October to himself, and, by his wit and good temper, let us see that he did not think an innocent mirth at all inconsistent with the strictest piety. And it is worthy of observation, that, notwithstanding the extraordinary gaiety of the gentlemen, not the least word escaped them on this occasion, that could offend the chastest ear. Lucius and Mellifont were in high spirits; but our fathers appeared transported above themselves; they had a peculiar satisfaction in their looks, while every gesture and every glance expressed the glad heart of a fond parent. But these are things too delicate to be described. Sophronia and my aunt had much the same elevated joy, which, whenever they endeavoured to express it, seemed too big for utterance. What a delightful circumstance, to think that our happiness is diffused, in so charming a manner, to those who are most dear to us!

Dinner being over, and the servants ordered to withdraw, my father presented Lucius with the writings belonging to the greater part of his estate. 'As I 'have given you the person of my 'daughter, and intrusted her future fe-'licity in your hands,' said he, with an air of open confidence, 'I make no 'scruple of giving you the unlimited 'possession of what is less dear to me. 'It would be an injury to you, my son, '(for now I may have the pleasure of 'calling you by this affectionate name) 'and shew me too little moved by your 'noble and generous sentiments, should 'I make you depend on my daughter 'for the enjoyment of any of the ele-'gancies of life. I, therefore, with the 'greatest satisfaction, rely on your 'virtue and prudence to manage the 'estate, which, as the husband of my 'Felicia, you have a right to partake of, 'in such a manner as to promote your 'mutual happiness.'—'Dear Sir,' said Lucius, interrupting him, 'you are 'pleased to oppress me with your good-'ness; but, while I would express my 'grateful acknowledgments, I must 'beg you not to straiten yourself, to 'add——' 'No, no,' interrupted my father, in his turn, 'you need not give 'yourself any pain on my account. I 'have reserved to myself an easy com-'petence, sufficient to support the cha-'racter I have always borne in life, and 'to supply all the exigences incident 'to the decline of it. A parent, in my 'opinion,' added he, smiling, 'should 'never be so profuse of his wealth, as 'to deprive himself of the capacity of 'living as he pleases without the assist-'ance of his children; and, indeed, 'none that deserve this indulgence can 'be pleased with seeing such a prepos-'terous, such an unnatural dependence. 'I consider you both as my children, 'your interests are now become inse-'parable; and, therefore, I have made 'no reserve for my daughter: the con-'vincing proofs I have received of the 'greatness of your mind, make all such

'precautions

'precautions unneceſſary. Nor will Fe-
'licia, I am perſuaded, be diſpleaſed
'that I have given all to you.'—'Why
'ſo, Sir?' interpoſed I; 'do you really
'think it no mortification to refuſe me
'the pleaſure of doing juſtice to Mr.
'Manly's merit, by giving him ſo con-
'ſiderable a proof of my regard, as it
'would be, to make him a preſent of
'a fine jointure, as ſoon as I had it in
'my poſſeſſion? How many agreeable
'things might I have heard him ſay to
'me on this occaſion! But,' ſeriouſly
added I, 'I am altogether as well pleaſed
'as it is; and I aſſure you, you could
'not have given me greater pleaſure
'than you have now done.'

The unexpected vivacity of this reply cauſed a general ſmile. Lucius bowed his head, and ſeemed particularly pleaſed with it; indeed, he had reaſon to be ſo. His looks ſhewed that he was charmed with my father's behaviour; for, though he had been ſenſible that he really gained nothing, by this inſtance of his confidence, in his integrity and affection to me; yet, as it was an agreeable proof of the great ſhare he had of his eſteem, it could not fail of giving him the higheſt ſatisfaction. We now joined in the warmeſt expreſſions of gratitude to this indulgent parent; whilſt I, much leſs embarraſſed on this occaſion than this dear man, endeavoured to find terms capable of expreſſing, in ſome meaſure, the fulneſs of his heart.

My father put an end to our acknowledgments, by turning to my father-in-law, and making him a preſent, anſwerable to the goodneſs of his own diſpoſition. It was a little eſtate of about two hundred a year, which is to return to us after his and Sophronia's deceaſe, and which they did not receive without thanking him with tears of gratitude; but in the moment when they ſeemed labouring under a ſurprize which ſtruck them dumb, and rendered them incapable of expreſſing themſelves, Mellifont, who had left us a few minutes before, returned, and, deſiring to know if we had done with buſineſs, introduced a band of muſick; and, by this means, prevented thoſe affecting acknowledgments, which, however agreeable, are always attended with ſome pain. The day was ſpent in innocent gaiety and mirth, and with that peculiar ſatisfaction which the happy occaſion was adapted to inſpire, amongſt the moſt intimate and cordial friends.

The next morning, while we were at breakfaſt, my aunt told us, that ſhe expected a viſit from ſome of the neighbouring gentlemen and ladies, to congratulate us on this happy union. 'Some
'of them,' added ſhe, laughing, 'as
'they affect to appear men of wit, will,
'I don't doubt, be fond of diſplaying
'it, in a manner that will not be very
'agreeable to the modeſty of either my
'niece or daughter; and, therefore, to
'ſave their bluſhes for the preſent, ſup-
'poſe they ſhould take an airing till din-
'ner?'—'I was juſt going to make the
'ſame propoſal,' ſaid my father, 'though
'from a different reaſon. The day is
'exceeding fine, and I ſhould be glad
'of the pleaſure of Mr. Manly's com-
'pany, without the fear of having our
'converſation interrupted.' Lucius thanked him for the honour he did him; and the coach being ſoon ready, we ſtepped in, leaving Mellifont with Amelia, who promiſed to follow us; we having before let them know the road we propoſed to take. My father began the converſation, by the moſt tender expreſſion of his affection. 'My dear Fe-
'licia,' ſaid he, 'how great is my joy
'to ſee you ſo happy! You are married
'to a man of ſenſe and probity; to a
'man, whom I ſhall love as a ſon, and
'eſteem as a worthy friend. I wiſh you
'could both know how happy a father
'you have made me.'—'Dear Sir,'
ſaid Lucius, 'I have not words to ex-
'preſs the leaſt part of that gratitude I
'feel for your goodneſs. Your hap-
'pineſs, as it ariſes from ours, ought
'to increaſe it too. I love you, as the
'tender father who gave me being. You
'are more than a father, you give me
'happineſs.' Here he took hold of my hand; and then looking again at my father—'O Sir,' continued he, with a full heart, 'let me thank you for this,
'the deareſt of all your gifts!'

'You are very welcome,' replied my father, with a ſmile; 'I hope my daugh-
'ter will prove herſelf worthy of ſuch
'a huſband. May God bleſs you both!
'You are now entered into a new ſcene
'of life, the very different cares, the
'different duties of which, require the
'exerciſe of very different abilities. My
'dear Lucius, I approve your huma-
'nity, that benevolence which will na-
'turally

'turally prompt you to pity and relieve 'the diſtreſſed; but even this affection, 'amiable as it is, is one of the moſt 'dangerous of all that the mind of man 'is ſenſible to. There are faults which 'ariſe even from goodneſs of heart, 'faults attended with worſe conſe-'quences than thoſe of cruelty and 'brutal ill-nature. Pity has ruined 'thouſands, men of the moſt refined 'ſenſe, and of the greateſt abilities; and 'when theſe are ruined, the ignorant 'and the ill-natured, proud of an op-'portunity of revenging the ſuperiority 'of their acquired endowments, are ſure 'to treat them with double contempt. 'And indeed, men of great humanity, 'though of the beſt ſenſe, frequently 'err in the plaineſt caſes; even where 'one, but a degree above a natural, 'would not be deceived. This appears 'ſtrange, yet it is an obſervation con-'firmed by daily experience. Theſe 'are, frequently, not only the worſt 'œconomiſts, but they are drawn into 'the weakeſt and moſt childiſh engage-'ments, where inevitable ruin is almoſt 'the natural conſequence. Yet the rea-'ſon of this is, perhaps, not hard to 'diſcover. Thoſe perſons whoſe 'thoughts are taken up with refined 'ſpeculations, commonly know but 'little of the world; they may be verſed, 'indeed, in prudential maxims, but 'there will always be a vaſt difference 'between theſe and truths founded on 'experience. A man of an open, be-'nevolent diſpoſition, while conſcious of 'the integrity of his own heart, is leſs 'inclined to ſuſpicion than others of 'more contracted views; he loves to 'think well of mankind, and frequently 'thinks better of individuals than they 'deſerve. But when pity has taken poſ-'ſeſſion of the heart—pity, a paſſion ſo 'nearly allied to love, that, like it, it 'baniſhes from the mind every inju-'rious idea—it is almoſt incapable of ſu-'ſpicion; it reflects not on poſſible con-'ſequences; or, if theſe do ariſe in the 'mind, they paſs away unregarded, 'and make too ſlight an impreſſion to 'prove effectual. The man of huma-'nity finds it much eaſier to act from 'paſſion than from reaſon; he is preſſed 'forwards by the impulſe of a lively 'imagination, filled with the advan-'tages that will attend the diſtreſſed per-'ſon on his compliance with his deſires; 'and therefore, when he is ſolicited from 'without, and, at the ſame time, prompt-'ed from within, by the impulſes of a 'generous and affected heart, there is 'no wonder if he finds a difficulty in 'ſaying *no*. There are circumſtances, 'in which a young man will find it ex-'tremely hard to pronounce this little 'monoſyllable; and, in order to do it, 'when neceſſary, he will be obliged to 'practiſe a great deal of ſelf-denial; 'but it is a mortification ſometimes ab-'ſolutely neceſſary. We have a kind 'of proverb which adviſes us "to "think all men rogues, till we find "them honeſt."

Lucius ſat all this while with his eyes fixed on my father in the utmoſt atten-tion; but being now unable to contain himſelf any longer, he cried out—'I 'dare ſay, Sir, the firſt perſon who made 'uſe of this proverb, was a diſhoneſt 'man himſelf. What a life of ſuſpi-'cion and diſtruſt! Can he be a friend 'to mankind? Can he have any com-'placency in his fellow-creatures, who 'looks upon them as a neſt of vipers; 'as villains, who only wait for an op-'portunity to rob or impoſe upon him?'

'No,' cried my father, interrupting him in his turn, 'I did not mention 'this proverb by way of approbation, 'as you would ſoon have found, had 'you ſuffered me to proceed; for though 'it is a ſure way to prevent being im-'poſed upon, yet it is unjuſt, and con-'ſequently criminal. It is a much more 'chriſtian diſpoſition, at leaſt, to believe 'every man honeſt, till we have reaſon 'to think him a villain: but, never-'theleſs, if we know the world, we 'ſhall ſee the neceſſity of uſing every 'proper precaution to ſecure ourſelves. 'Your benevolence, I allow, ought to 'ſhew itſelf in real acts of kindneſs, but 'it ſhould be in ſuch acts as reaſon and 'prudence will warrant; a beneficence 'generous and diffuſive, and, at the 'ſame time, conſiſtent with prudence 'and the rules of juſt œconomy. Let 'me perſuade you to be cautious of ſign-'ing your name. Learn boldly to re-'fuſe what would be improper for you 'to grant; and, having once refuſed, 'let no importunity prevail upon you to 'act contrary to your judgment. Ne-'ver let your ſteward's accounts paſs 'unexamined, nor ſuffer him to diſtreſs 'a tenant without ſeeing the poor man 'yourſelf.'

Here my father pauſed; when Lucius, thanking him for his advice, and the other coach, with Mellifont and Amelia, driv-

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ing to the side of ours, the conversation turned on indifferent subjects. It is now time to conclude this long letter; but I must first do myself the honour to assure your ladyship, that nothing but the pleasure of your company can add to the felicity of your most affectionate friend,

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XXVII.

DEAR MADAM,

IN my last, if I am not mistaken, I told you, that my aunt proposed our taking an airing before dinner, to avoid the impertinence of some country gentlemen, whom, it seems, she had reason to expect; as they had early in the morning sent her word, that they would do themselves the honour of paying her a visit, to congratulate Amelia and me on our happiness. Their persons, though not their characters, were unknown to me; and though Amelia and her mother had seen them before, yet, as they had no acquaintance in the family, we all looked upon this as an unwelcome intrusion; which, on account of their birth and fortune, we were obliged to overlook; and they, doubtless, imagined us very much honoured by a visit which we would very gladly have dispensed with. For my part, the very idea of being obliged to bear with their impertinence gave a damp to my satisfaction; and, upon my return, I could not help wishing very heartily that my aunt might be mistaken; a wish that I the more readily indulged, as I did not then know her reason for expecting them. But this was both vain and fruitless; for at some distance we could observe a number of spruce servants, in very rich liveries; and, upon our entering the court, our ears were saluted, or rather stunned, with a confused noise, which issued from the window of a room adjoining to the hall. One was singing, with a loud, harsh, and disagreeable voice; while two or three others, all talking at the same time, were engaged in a warm dispute, each seeming desirous to gain a victory rather by the strength of his lungs than of his arguments, and to struggle to outvie the rest in noise. What a jargon was here! Had our ears been entertained with the dismal thrum of the bladder and string, or had we been welcomed home by a concert of catcalls, I could not have formed an idea of a more disgusting entertainment, than I now expected to receive from the company of those country squires.

My father frowned, and Lucius seemed heartily vexed, but neither of them spoke a word: however, the coach no sooner drove up to the door, than the revel-rout ceased; and the coach-door being opened, Lucius leaped out, and, presenting his hand, helped me to alight, in spite of half a dozen young rakes, who rudely endeavoured to push before him, and all of whom seemed desirous of doing me this honour. I was next obliged to suffer a disagreeable salute from each; which the last, being already half drunk, rendered, if possible, more distasteful, by belching in my face: but it was a ceremony I was forced to submit to, and good manners made me disguise my reluctance; while my father, being entirely unknown, stood by, with Lucius and my aunt, with the appearance of unconcerned spectators.

This being performed, with as ill a grace as possible, and a wretched compliment bestowed upon me from each, they all ran, with the same familiar air, to the other coach; and Mellifont, having set his foot on the ground, to my no small surprize, was surrounded by two or three of the most forward; one of which, shaking him by the hand, cried—'Damn 'ye, ye strong-back'd dog, I wish you 'joy!' Nor were the compliments of the others much more polite; they wondered where the devil he had been, but could never dream that he had been poaching. Amelia having, after my example, gone through the nauseous ceremonial, we all went in together: but, as we were passing through the hall, I observed one of the most disagreeable wretches I ever beheld; a tall, lean, raw, lank, ugly fellow, with a long face and hollow eyes, dressed in a green frock and laced waistcoat; who, swinging his arms, ran to Mellifont, and giving him a lusty blow on the shoulder, and at the same time seizing fast hold of a button, cried—'Is that grave son of a bitch he?' nodding at Lucius; and then added he—'Zoons! I have a good mind to make 'him a cuckold—damn me if I have 'not!' Though he spoke pretty low, Lucius overheard him; and, letting go my hand, stepped up to him, and immediately seizing hold of his nose, which was

was none of the ſhorteſt, led him to me, and inſiſted upon his aſking my pardon, which he did without heſitation; whilſt I, trembling with fear, readily gave him abſolution; when, beſtowing a hearty curſe upon Lucius, and writhing his face into ſeveral ugly contortions, I ſuppoſe to bring his noſe into due form, he turned, with a ſilly grin, to his companions, and, with a ſheepiſh air of affected pleaſantry, endeavoured to laugh it off as a joke; though he ſaid it was a curſed queer joke, and he hardly knew whether it was in jeſt or earneſt.

You can hardly conceive, Madam, the terror I was in; for I immediately dreaded, that the reſentment of all his companions would fall upon Lucius, whom I, therefore, apprehended to be in danger: but I was in a moment relieved from my fears; for, to my no ſmall ſurprize and ſatisfaction, they all ſet up a loud laugh, and, clapping their hands, capered about the hall with an air of triumphant ſatisfaction; and my father, who had at firſt put his hand to his ſword, drew it back with a ſmile.

Nothing now was heard but applauſes on Lucius, who was regarded as a hero; and the repetition of I—I—I—, from two or three, running about, and mimicking the look, geſture, and ſnuffle of their companion, while Lucius led him by the noſe; a kind of wit, which, as it was perfectly agreeable to their talents, ſeemed to give them the higheſt delight.

As ſoon as they were conducted to another room, we ſtepped into the parlour, which they had left upon our return home, the floor of which was pretty well ſtrewed with broken glaſſes; when my father obſerved to Lucius, that if theſe were his friend's companions, he could not help forming a very bad opinion both of his taſte and morals. Whether Lucius would have vindicated Mellifont or not, I cannot tell; for my father had no ſooner made this remark, than he himſelf entered the room, and advancing to Amelia, who had ſtaid with us—'I 'have left,' ſaid he, 'this ſtupid rabble 'of baronets and ſquires to themſelves; 'a parcel of familiar puppies! who, be-'cauſe I had ſome time ago the misfor-'tune to blunder into their company, 'muſt pretend to rank me in the num-'ber of their acquaintance, and, as 'ſuch, to pay me this viſit.'—'Pray, 'who are they? what are they?' cried my father, with a peeviſh haſtineſs that ſtrongly expreſſed his diſlike. 'They are, Sir,' ſaid he, 'gentlemen of diffe-'rent diſpoſitions, united together only 'by a common taſte for a favourite di-'verſion. Some of them are fond of 'the cockpit, others are fox-hunters, 'but all of them keep running horſes: 'and poſitively, by the ruſticity of their 'behaviour, one would imagine that 'they had their education in the ſtable; 'and indeed, for aught I know, the 'groom may be the better gentleman. 'But, as they have moſt of them very 'conſiderable eſtates, they imagine that 'they have a licence to trouble whom 'they pleaſe with their impertinence. 'The ladies, I expect, will have a ter-'rible entertainment at dinner.'—'I 'am afraid ſo,' ſaid Amelia, 'and I 'heartily wiſh them gone.'—'If we 'could but ſhut our ears as eaſily as our 'eyes,' cried I, 'I ſhould eſteem it now 'an happineſs.'—'Gentlemen, ſquires, 'baronets!' ſaid my father, with a ſneer; 'fools, blockheads, ignorant, 'ſtupid raſcals! they know no higher ſa-'tisfaction than a horſe-laugh.'—'Well, 'well,' returned Mellifont, very gravely, 'but you muſt not form an idea of our 'country gentlemen from theſe; many 'of whom would be aſhamed of being 'ſeen in their company, as I aſſure you 'I am. There are amongſt us men of 'ſenſe, agreeable companions, and here 'and there is ſcattered a man of hu-'manity.'

This converſation was interrupted by our being informed that dinner was ready; on which we went to the dining-room, and, after making an apology for our abſence, took our ſeats at the table.

Horſes were the ſubject we found them upon when we entered the room, and this topick laſted all the time we were at dinner; nay, ſo ſtrictly did they adhere to it, that their very jeſts had a ſmack of the groom, mingled with an indecency the moſt ſhocking and diſtaſteful, and too coarſe and indelicate even to deſerve the name of a double entendre. Amelia and I were toaſted under the name of pretty fillies; which no ſooner went round, than one drank health to the riders; and this produced a loud laugh of applauſe, and, in the courſe of going round, picked up an additional piece of obſcenity from every one of theſe gentlemen, who, emulous of exceeding in this way, conſtantly produced a freſh laugh, and a ſtare in our faces.

faces. Amelia and I were in a situation worthy of pity; we blushed, hung down our heads, and (I speak for myself) I was ready to sink with shame. At last, somebody asked Lucius if I was a good pacer. 'Aye, 'damme! and needs neither whip nor 'spur,' cried another. All eyes were again fixed on me; and thus the supposed wit was bandied about, collecting fresh mire from every kick. But whenever the man who had given us the affront in the hall began to speak, for he seemed very desirous of adding his quota, Mellifont stopped him short, by snuffling out, 'I—I—I—,' and giving him a hint, that if he had not yet enough, he would lead him another turn. This kept him silent, and afforded us some small relief.

At last something was said, which I had the happiness not to understand; it was addressed to Mellifont, and was something about jumping—no, leaping was the word: but it seems it was very gross; for Lucius, who had several times before began to speak, but was interrupted and borne down by some stupid ribaldry, seemed now resolved to break through all opposition; and therefore, raising his voice louder than common—'Pray, gentlemen,' said he, 'what 'have these ladies done, that they should 'be shocked with such poor, wretched 'obscenity? Is there any merit in put-'ting a lady to the blush? It is cow-'ardly, mean, and scandalous; below 'the dignity of a gentleman. A gen-'tleman! did I say?—below the dig-'nity of a man!'—'Cowardly!' cried one of the most forward, interrupting him, with a haughty air, and frowning steady look, 'pray who do you call 'coward? Faith, I won't be led by the 'nose.'—'Yes, cowardly!' cried Lucius, raising his voice still higher, and speaking with equal sternness; 'aye, 'cowardly!'—'Cowardly!' echoed my father and Mellifont, at the same time. 'I repeat it again,' continued Lucius, with a firmness and resolution that charmed me; 'it is cowardly, an insult 'on decency; it is affronting the ladies 'in the tenderest part; and, however authorized by brutal custom on these oc-'casions, it is an insult on nature—the 'most barbarous insult, thus to discolour the cheek of conscious innocence.' —'Pox!' cried a youth of about eighteen, who seemed, by his ignorance and his dialect, never to have been twenty miles from home, 'he weant let us be 'witty; I'll be curst if ever I was so 'witty in aw my life. The women 'should no' be sheamfac'd; it is time 'that was o'er, or the devil's in't. I 'ha' said more behauf before my own 'mother at wom, and shu loff'd as thof 'shu would ha' be——' 'Witty!' cried my father, interrupting him, with a sneer; 'let us see that you have com-'mon sense, young man, before you af-'fect to be witty.'—'Common sense!' said Mellifont, with a satirical laugh; 'Common Sense is a lady that very few 'here are acquainted with, I can tell 'you that: why, Common Sense is no 'common woman; and therefore she is 'as much shunned by these, as a com-'mon woman by a man who has any 'sense at all. And as to my Lady De-'cency, they don't even know her when 'they see her; if they did, it might be 'possible to make them blush.' Mellifont had laid down his knife and fork at the beginning of this speech; and now, leaning back in his chair, and holding up his hands in a supplicating posture, he immediately added, with an arch look, that had a mixture of the serious and comical—

'" Hail Decency! celestial maid!
'" Descend from heav'n to beauty's aid,"
' And blast the wretch that's not afraid
' To affront thee.'

The humorous manner of his introducing the two first lines from Swift, and his adding the last, without the least hesitation, gave us an agreeable surprize, and made my father and Lucius smile, for the first time since they had been at table. And indeed, their obstinately refusing to drink all the toasts proposed by these rakes, and their vindicating our refusal, had kept them in a constant squabble, whilst Mellifont was sure to regulate himself according to their motions. These gentlemen, intimidated, affronted, or struck with some sense of shame, continued pretty silent for some time; and then resuming their favourite subject of race-horses, to our no small satisfaction, drank to each other, and let us alone.

At last this hateful meal was over, and I protest I would not go through the same mortifications for any considerations. My mind was then in a very

tender situation, easily shocked, and extremely susceptible of pain. How barbarous, how cruel, how inhuman, then was it, thus to blast the joy of innocence! rudely to tear the veil that hides those rites that modest decency would conceal, but which neither God, nor reason, condemn! with brutal insolence to trample on the snowy robes of bashful chastity! How impudent to stare us into confusion, and to add a triumph to the affront by a ridiculous laugh! I am shocked at the recollection of this scene; and therefore must conclude with assuring you, that I am your ladyship's most sincere and affectionate friend,

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XXVIII.

AFTER so long a silence, Madam, you may justly wonder that I have the assurance to confess that I am still alive; but however ashamed I am of my negligence, I have neither the complaisance nor the resolution to leave the world out of a punctilio of good-breeding, especially as I am in perfect health, and so happy in my present situation, that I can, without the least pain, think of deferring, for many years, a visit to the heavenly regions. You tell me I have lost, in the wife, the affection I owe to the friend; and I will not deny your having, in appearance, some reason for this heavy charge; but as I hate apologies, I will not take the trouble to justify myself, though I would have you think my negligence owing to the different turn of my affairs, to my indolence, stupidity, or whatever else you please, rather than to a want of that affection which I shall ever feel for you.

Three months ago, I gave you an account of our marriage; and I have now to add, that, in order to put an end to those ceremonious visits, which at last began to grow extremely fatiguing, we found ourselves under a necessity of leaving my aunt's sooner than we had intended; Mr. Manly, therefore, bought an estate at some miles distance, with a mansion-house, which, by his direction, was repaired and furnished with all possible diligence. We removed hither about two months after I sent you my last, and, at the same time, Mellifont carried his bride to his own estate. We frequently see each other, and enjoy all that satisfaction from these visits which the most intimate friendship can afford us. Not the least reserve subsists between us; a perfect sympathy in each other's happiness makes us such strangers to ceremony, that we have nothing to do but to consult our own inclinations, to render us agreeable to each other. Our house is a very neat building, yet so plain a one, that it would be trifling too much with your patience to give a description of it. The situation is indeed charming, being surrounded with woods and groves, which on the one side must, in the summer season, appear extremely delightful, as the other does so now, though in the midst of frost and snow. *There* will be the triumph of nature; *here* is the boast of art; *there* that uncultivated wildness, which pleases without method, and without design, charming most where the easy confusion, and agreeable disorder, render art superfluous, and labour vain; *here* all the ornaments that art, in despight of nature, can bestow.

In the front is a tall and stately wood, composed of oaks venerable with age, with no other opening but a large area, and a vista, which carries the eye from the centre of the building to a considerable distance. Here the intermingled branches must, I fancy, in the summer season, cast a shade, varied with all the degrees of light, from the bright sunbeam, glittering through the boughs, to the dusky gloom of sober twilight.

Behind the main building is a garden of considerable extent; which, even in this season of the year, has it's beauties. To take no notice of the parterre, which lies next the house, the hedges, which are on each side the principal walks, are formed of ever-greens, resembling walls, adorned, at proper distances, with pilasters, which, with eternal verdure, branch into all the decorations of architecture. In the midst of each walk, along an opening, on either hand, the eye is carried through a number of triumphal arches, composed of the same leafy materials, and which, leading to the extremity of the garden, are bounded by several fine alcoves, the paintings of which, though injured by time, have a very agreeable effect. In some of the squares composed by these walks, are fish-ponds, in others groves of fruit-trees, and in others knots of flowers

of

of various forms, which, in the season for these fragrant ornaments, must, I fancy, be vastly delightful. In the middle of the garden, where all the principal avenues meet, upon a pretty high ascent, is a summer-house, the windows of which, as well as the walls, are so covered with ever-greens, that the faint obstructed light spreads a gloom perfectly soothing; while the clusters of shining berries half covered with snow, hanging against the glass, with frosted leaves of intermingled silver and green, seem to give the lye to the season, and to join in one view Christmas and Autumn. At the entrance is a guard of giants, with their massy clubs resting on the ground; harmless monsters! that I can view without the least trembling. 'Tis true, they themselves appear in some disorder, for want of pruning; their heads and bodies are covered with a number of luxuriant branches, and even their fingers are grown near half a yard beyond the just proportion that ought to be allowed them.

Autumn was far spent before Lucius and I, attended by my father, went to take a view of our new habitation. I fancied myself in fairy land; and could not help expressing my surprize, that while the winds, on one side the house, scattered in wavy curls the russet leaves, which, with every blast, fell from the half-naked groves; on the other, they were cloathed with lively verdure, and still appeared smiling in their gayest liveries.

'Tis true, there is something disagreeably formal in the studied regularity that reigns here: statues, obelisks, and triumphal arches, are but awkwardly mimicked in box and yew; but still they find work for some labouring hands, who might otherwise want the means of subsistence; and, for this reason, Lucius may possibly continue them in their present situation, with only a few alterations, in order to render the whole more easy, free, and natural. Besides, as the house and gardens are in the midst of a wood, this spot, even in the summer season, will agreeably set off the wildness of the prospect, and, by a pleasing contrast, heighten the variegated scene.

In this peaceful retirement, Madam, we enjoy a tranquillity unknown to courts. Our passions, which, before this union, were high-raised, and too tenderly ardent to be unmixed with pain, now gently soothed, sink into a delightful repose. The diffidence, the flutter of heart, is gone, and exchanged for the calmer sweets of an endearing friendship. We have now the satisfaction of passing our time in the proper employment of reasonable and immortal beings. No wayward humours interrupt our peace; no little jars fret the tender cord of sweet content and mutual complacency, which, when once broken, is so difficult to join again.

Religion, which, to others, is a source of the most gloomy reflections, is to us an inexhaustible spring of rational and sublime delight. We daily address the supreme and sovereign Good, as our father, our friend, and benefactor; we admire the wisdom, the wonderous skill that shines in all his works: we adore his goodness, and pour forth our gratitude in humble praise. What transport can equal that of gratitude! what delight be comparable to that of a thankful heart! If you call this enthusiasm, it is, at least, an enthusiasm the most noble and refined, justified by the coolest dictates of reason, and necessary to render human happiness compleat.

Our minds have hitherto been calm and unruffled. My sister Marilla is my constant companion: I have prevailed with her to stay with us a fortnight; and we spend a part of the day together, either in reading in the summer-house, which Lucius has furnished with the most valuable ornament, a fine collection of books; or in paying or receiving visits, among a few select friends. Hither we sometimes all three repair; and, with intermingled chat and reading, find subjects ever new and entertaining. Great part of my time is taken up with the management of my family, or in working at my needle. Your ladyship sees what a domestick animal I am grown: but while these amusements give an alacrity to my spirits, by diversifying my satisfactions, I shall have the greatest reason to be pleased with them; for though you smile at the meanness of my taste, I find a real happiness arising, even from these low employments, since they not only preserve peace and order in the family, but give a greater relish to the superior pleasures of which I am sensible, when, unbending my mind, I enjoy the conversation of my friends. As to the vapours, Madam, it is so

long since I have felt those modish disorders, that I scarcely know what they mean; so that not the rosy milk-maid, happy in her humble obscurity, that sings or laughs from morn till evening, can be less troubled with the spleen than I.

I have nothing more to add, but that I am yours, &c.

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XXIX.

DEAR MADAM,

THOUGH it is impossible I should receive an answer to my last, you having yet scarcely read it, I write now to let you see that I can commit, upon occasion, an act of supererogation. Add this to my former neglect, and try if it won't, in some measure, make the balance even.

Two or three days after our arrival here, my father returned to London. We were now pretty well settled; for those workmen who had been employed in making the necessary repairs, being discharged, every thing was soon reduced into proper order. Mellifont, Amelia, and my sister Marilla, were present, when my father, in the most tender manner, took his leave. We had all resolved to accompany him some miles on the road, but he positively refused to suffer it, alledging that this would only prolong the uneasiness of parting: we were, therefore, obliged to submit; and being mounted on horseback, (for he had before made us a present of his coach) attended by a servant, was soon out of sight. We returned into the hall, and stood for some time, in a thoughtful posture, without speaking a word; when at last Mellifont, assuming an air of chearfulness, cried out—'Come, come, 'what do we stand here for? We must 'divert this pensive humour; suppose 'we take a turn in the garden?' This motion was immediately complied with, and the uneasy gloom insensibly dispersed; but the weather being pretty sharp, I ordered a fire to be made in the summer-house, to which we retired. Having taken our places, Marilla said with a smile—'I was one day last week 'to visit Miss Powers, an elderly maiden 'lady of great prudence, and the daugh-'ter of a deceased clergyman; who, 'though she has but a small fortune, finds 'the means, by the help of the greatest 'œconomy, to make a pretty genteel 'appearance. When I knocked at the 'door, I was told she was not at home; 'but as she was expected every moment, 'I was desired to walk in; and, indeed, 'I had hardly sat down when she en-'tered the room, with her hands covered 'with dirt, and one of them stained 'with blood. I arose, and, with a 'good deal of concern, enquired what 'was the matter.—"O, nothing," 'cried she: "I have fallen down, but "I have only hurt my hand; it was a "mercy I did not daub my new gown." 'It was impossible for me to forbear 'smiling at this answer; I desired she 'would explain herself, and asked her 'if she thought the Almighty could be 'supposed to concern himself in an af-'fair of such trifling moment as a few 'yards of silk, which, though it had 'been soiled, would still answer all the 'ends of dress, though not of vanity. 'She was very much displeased at this 'answer; and, therefore, all the while 'she was cleaning herself, and preparing 'a plaister for her hand, warmly justi-'fied the propriety of the expression; 'alledging that nothing was too mean 'to fall under the inspection of the 'supreme Governor of the world. I 'thought this argument so conclusive, 'that I was quite at a loss for a reply; 'and, therefore, introduced a different 'subject. But I have since recollected 'an observation of yours, brother, that, 'among superficial thinkers, it is no 'uncommon thing to find an injudi-'cious application of the most important 'truths, when it is made to support 'their own weak prejudices, to cases 'in themselves of no importance.'

This short story gave rise to a very long conversation. Lucius began with observing, that particular circumstances will make some persons look upon an inconsiderable pain as a trifle, when compared to the loss of what can only serve to flatter the imagination, and the more so, in proportion to the difficulty of procuring these gratifications. 'This,' said he, 'is a common case; but if it 'be proper to call the preserving a gown 'unsullied a mercy, or a favour from 'Heaven, it must be equally so to make 'this a petition in prayer: yet, if a 'lady was to be overheard at her devo-'tions, crying—"Lord preserve my "best gown and petticoat from stains

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'and dirt!" the absurdity would be 'so glaring, that nobody could avoid 'taking notice of it. One who has a 'competency, prays for wealth; another, 'that he may obtain the honour for 'which he is soliciting: but what is 'this, abstracted from the moral use of 'wealth and honour, which few seem 'to regard, more than praying for a 'new head-dress or a new gown? Or 'what are the petitions for the continu-'ance of these, when none but them-'selves receive the least benefit from 'them, but praying that the gown, or 'petticoat, may remain unsullied? A 'gentleman who has a coach and pair, 'is ambitious of being drawn by six 'horses; and, only with this view, sol-'licits for a place, to enable him to 'accomplish it: now, where is the dif-'ference between praying that he may 'obtain this place, and praying that, 'instead of a coach and two, he may 'ride in a coach and six? If a pretty 'milkmaid should pray for money to 'buy a new top-knot, would her peti-'tion be more ridiculous?

'Men are carried away by false ap-'pearances, and enamoured with the 'dazzling shew of some glittering trifle. 'Providence, they flatter themselves, 'is employed on their behalf, and the 'God of nature engaged in procuring 'the empty, the pernicious bauble. 'The miser unjustly seizes the last re-'mains of an unfortunate, helpless fa-'mily, exposes them to want and beg-'gary, and adds the fruits of extortion 'to his useless store, and cries, with his 'hollow eyes lifted up to heaven, It 'is a mercy that he was not too late 'to save his money! Might not the 'less guilty debauchee go to the stews, 'and, with equal propriety, say, It 'is a mercy that he found his favourite 'girl at home! Yet what horrid 'profanation! Can any thing be more 'superstitious, more shocking and ab-'surd? Unconscious of the final result 'of things, while Heaven is affronted, 'they are delighted with the gratifica-'tion of their favourite vices: but how 'vain, how delusive, the joy! They 'mistook for happiness, what was really 'the cause of the sharpest anguish. The 'miser, as he carries home his gold, is 'robbed of all his dear recovered trea-'sure; while the debauchee is expiring 'with a loathsome disease.'

'But do you infer from this, brother,' said Marilla, 'that the Deity is entirely 'unconcerned about the temporal hap-'piness or misery of individuals? For 'my part, I think this would be going 'a little too far.'

Lucius paused a moment, and then said, he had hitherto only endeavoured to expose a false notion of Providence, and that kind of superstition, which makes some men, who deem themselves the peculiar favourites of Heaven, resolve events the most trivial, in comparison with the important concerns of human life, into signal blessings and deliverances. A man of this turn knows that gratitude is a duty, and affects to discharge it very minutely; but never reflecting that the super-intending care of Providence is exercised over a whole universe, and, with regard to him, only as a part of that whole; his gratitude, which should be always warm and lively, lies dormant, till some circumstance of his own life, no matter how trifling in itself, provided it powerfully strikes his passions, calls it forth to exercise: he can then prove to you how much above his neighbours he is the object of the Divine favour, and how justly his pious acknowledgments render him so.

They then entered more largely into the consideration of a particular Providence; and, as I have recited their observations hitherto, I think I may as well endeavour to give you the substance of the rest. But, dear Madam, you must excuse me if I fail in the performance: it is a task somewhat above my abilities; and, as I shall be forced to abridge a very long dispute, which met with various interruptions, I am sensible it will want all those natural graces in the repetition which gave life and spirit to the conversation.

Mellifont observed, as the world is a great machine, governed by fixed mechanical laws, it is most reasonable to suppose, that man, as a free agent, is entirely left to the free exercise of his natural abilities, and to all the consequences resulting from it; for it is absurd to imagine, that a Being of infinite sagacity should form a world in so bungling a manner, as to make any interposition at all necessary afterwards; much more to suppose it so imperfect, as to stand in need of continual botching and mending. 'A man makes a 'watch,

'watch, by which I would illuſtrate my 'idea of this grand piece of mechaniſm; 'but this watch, though it may be per- 'fect in it's kind, yet, as it wants fre- 'quent winding up, and eſpecially as it 'calls for repeated repairs, is a piece of 'workmanſhip unworthy the ſkill of an 'almighty Artificer.'

'Excuſe me, Mellifont,' replied Lu- 'cius; 'you are going on with a ſuppo- 'ſition that will never be granted. I 'readily allow, that the ſtupendous 'fabrick of this earth, and all the un- 'numbered worlds that fill the vaſt im- 'menſity of ſpace, move, in their ſeveral 'orbits, by the moſt perfect laws; but, 'does it follow from hence, that the 'whole is only a grand piece of clock- 'work, which, being ſet a going, will 'move ſeveral thouſand years before it 'be run down? Gravitation, by which 'all bodies have a tendency to each 'other, according to the ſtricteſt en- 'quiry, is one of thoſe qualities which 'do not eſſentially reſide in matter, con- 'ſequently, it can be no part of the 'machine. Your watch, then, has not 'only loſt it's ſpring, but the pivots are 'dropped from every wheel, and the 'whole become a heap of confuſion; 'nay, the very wheels themſelves have 'loſt their form, and the metal of which 'they are compoſed is crumbled into 'infinite minute particles.

'This gravitation, which evades the 'ſearch of the moſt curious enquiries, 'can be reſolved into nothing but the 'immediate hand of Omnipotence, which 'locks together the infinitely ſmall par- 'ticles of ſolids, impels and gives mo- 'tion to the heavenly bodies, adds freſh 'fuel to the ſun, and whirls round it 'this ponderous maſs of earth and ſea, 'in a conſtant rotation of days and ſea- 'ſons. Hence ariſes a general Provi- 'dence, which, preſiding over all na- 'ture, gives fertility to the ſoil, raiſes 'the ſap in vegetables, bloſſoms in the 'trees, and glows in every flower.

'It is very apparent, that thunder 'and lightning, ſunſhine and rain, and, 'in ſome meaſure, the various degrees 'of heat and cold, are not under the 'ſame regulations as the diurnal 'and annual changes; ſince ſome of 'them are ſo far from being periodical, 'that they have no relation to time and 'place, but are, with reſpect to us, ab- 'ſolutely uncertain and precarious; yet, 'on ſome of theſe depend the ſub- 'ſiſtence, the ſupport, and very being, 'of the whole animal and vegetable 'world.

'Here is another inſtance, and in this 'there is room for the exertion both 'of a general and particular Providence; 'an inſtance, which you, Sir, would 'have found ſome difficulty in reducing 'to a ſcheme wholly mechanical. The 'earth is parched up with drought, the 'air is more and more rarified, and, 'conſequently, by it's tenuity, more 'unfit to raiſe to a due height, and ſup- 'port thoſe miſts from the ſea and 'rivers, which are neceſſary to form 'the refreſhing rain. Who is it that 'directs the clouds to thicken in the 'heavens, to fall in cool, refreſhing 'ſhowers, and, before it be too late, at 'once to rejoice the earth and bleſs 'mankind? If this dry ſeaſon laſted 'one month, why might it not have 'laſted two, ſix, or twelve, till man 'and beaſt had been quite deſtroyed, 'and whole regions laid in ruins? 'Again, the rain falls, the moiſt and 'ſpungy air ſtill collects, and ſtill pours 'in a ſettled ſtream; and there is greater 'reaſon to believe that it will rain to- 'morrow than there was yeſterday that 'it will rain to-day; and while it con- 'tinues the probability is ſtill on the ſide 'of it's longer continuance. Did not the 'Parent of mankind interpoſe, the all- 'enlivening ſun might for ever hide his 'cheering beams, and we might be 'curſed with a cloudy ſky, while joy 'would be for ever baniſhed, and ſeed- 'time and harveſt be no more.

'In theſe inſtances, we daily ſee the 'moſt convincing proofs of the friendly 'care of the univerſal Parent. Hence, 'he bleſſes one nation, and depreſſes 'another; and, even in the ſame coun- 'try, humbles and exalts whomſoever 'he pleaſes.

'But, to be more particular; is there 'the leaſt ſhadow of a probability, if we 'may judge from analogy, that this 'ſtupendous Being, who with ſuch in- 'finite care and ſkill preſerves the ma- 'terial, the vegetable, the animal world, 'ſhould be entirely regardleſs of the 'intellectual and moral? That the 'Being, who knows the moſt ſecret 'ſprings that move the human heart, 'ſhould not, upon occaſion, influence 'theſe, and, by affecting an individual, 'give happineſs to millions? That he 'ſhould inſpire with wiſdom, or perplex

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'and confound, so as best to answer the 'wise designs of his government? That 'the God of truth should, by diffusing 'a little light over a dark, benighted 'mind, promote the cause of truth, and 'spread the influence of pure religion, a 'free enquiry, and liberty of conscience, through a whole nation? That 'the most benevolent Being in the universe should grant the petitions of the 'man whose heart is prepared by humble prayer to receive the blessings he 'asks? That the Friend of mankind, 'the most virtuous, the most amiable 'Being, should look with complacency 'on virtue in distress, and relieve the 'pious supplicant who confides in his 'goodness? That he should curb the 'pride of the successful villain, and 'shield the honest heart from the sly 'attacks of the fraudulent knave? Is 'there any thing irrational in this? any 'thing beneath a God? If it be more 'noble to change the swelling anguish 'of distress into the gladsome raptures 'of gratitude and joy, than to form the 'most curious machine, this must be an 'employment more worthy of a God 'than to create a world of lifeless matter, 'or all the glories of what Milton calls 'the "golden pavement of heaven, or "the bright sea of jasper, or of liquid "pearl."

Mellifont looked very grave, and for some time continued silent, as if lost in thought; when seeming to recollect himself—'Well, well,' replied he, 'you 'may, for aught I know, be in the 'right. We giddy-headed fellows don't 'think so deeply. But, after all, yours 'is an opinion that, now I think of it, 'we may reasonably wish to be true. 'However, let us change the subject.'

Thus, Madam, with indefatigable labour, have I blundered through this long conversation, and am now so heartily tired, that I am absolutely unable to add any thing more, than that I am most affectionately yours,

FELICIA MANLY.

P. S. When I had finished the above letter, instead of sending it away immediately, as I at first intended, I resolved to shew it Lucius, and this delay retarded my sending it till the end of the week. I have just now received an answer to my last; but with what surprize do I find myself so unmercifully treated about one poor paragraph*, which, though you had disliked, your good-nature might have made you overlook! I am really half angry; but you throw away so much wit and humour on my pious rant, as you are pleased to call it, that I am almost afraid and ashamed to confess it: however, I can't help being persuaded, that all this mirth is at the expence of your more sober judgment. But the bottom of my paper puts me in mind that it is time to conclude this long postscript; I therefore refer you to my next for an answer, and, for the present, throw down my pen.

LETTER XXX.

DEAR MADAM,

I SHALL take no notice of the ridiculous light in which you place my manner of life. Your representing me as a recluse, and the companion of the young Druid Lucius, and your invocation to the rural gods and goddesses, on their receiving me to these sequestered, ever-verdant shades, have such a mixture of pleasantry and humour, that with all that solemn sanctity which you lay to my charge, I could not help laughing very heartily: but the case is a little different with regard to what you call the puritanical scheme, and the pious whim; for your ridicule here has a levity, in my opinion, bordering a little upon the prophane. Yet, for all this, it seems you must know what method Lucius took to make me comply with it, and insist upon my sending you the particulars. Can any thing be more extraordinary? However, to let you see how much I am yours, I obey, and proceed.

A few days after our marriage, Lucius desired me to take a turn with him in the garden. I readily complied; and as I perceived an unusual thoughtfulness in his look, I endeavoured to divert him; when, taking hold of my hand—'My 'dear Felicia,' said he, 'I am going 'to make myself appear to you in a 'very ridiculous light, and to make a 'proposal that I fear will expose me to

* Letter XXVIII. page 99. We daily address the Supreme, &c. from which passage Charlotte takes occasion to ridicule prayer.

'be

'be laughed at: but perhaps I injure 'you; I am perſuaded I do. Cuſtom 'makes us aſhamed of our duty: we are 'aſhamed of uttering ſolemn, important 'truths, though of the greateſt moment; 'for however freely we talk of the ſo-'cial duties, it is with reluctance we 'mention thoſe to our Maker.'

'How you raiſe my curioſity!' cried I. 'Out with it, dear Sir, I beſeech you, 'and don't keep me any longer in ſu-'ſpence.'

'You know, my dear,' continued he, with a tender warmth, 'the bleſſings I 'am loaded with. I imagine myſelf 'raiſed from almoſt nothing; I ſee my 'father relieved from thoſe diſtreſſes 'which weighed me down; and, while 'ſurrounded with plenty, I enjoy one 'bleſſing more, dearer than all the af-'fluence of life. Ah, what is life com-'pared to this! Can I, O can I, ſmo-'ther the gratitude of my heart? Can I 'confine it within the narrow limits of 'my own breaſt? Will not you join 'with me in adoring the kind Sovereign 'of the world? Shall we not, with 'united hearts, at once expreſs the full 'ſentiments of our ſouls, and keep 'alive the pious ardour that longs for 'utterance? Shall we not, by peti-'tioning the continuance of his mercy, 'implant and cheriſh thoſe diſpoſitions 'that will make us more worthy of that 'mercy?'

'As I am equally intereſted in the 'bleſſings you mention,' ſaid I, 'I 'ought, perhaps, to reproach myſelf with 'a want of that ſenſibility, which you 'expreſs with a warmth that, I muſt 'own, is very affecting. I have heard 'prayer ridiculed; and you muſt ex-'cuſe me if I ſay, I am afraid I ſhould 'look upon it as a few minutes paſſed 'in a very irkſome manner. There is 'ſomething ſo ſolemn and gloomy in 'the very idea of theſe ſet devotions, 'that they almoſt frighten me.'

'Let us baniſh,' ſaid he, with a ſmile, 'the gloom of ſuperſtition, and Religion 'will then appear all over amiable; her 'beauties will brighten upon the re-'view, and the more we are acquainted 'with her, the more we ſhall be charmed 'with her graces. Prayer is one of the 'firſt duties dictated by natural Reli-'gion, the elder ſiſter of Chriſtianity; 'a duty naturally ariſing from our obli-'gations to, and dependence on, the 'univerſal Parent, the Friend of man-'kind, the Patron of virtue, the moſt 'amiable, the moſt kind and benevo-'lent Being in the univerſe: a duty en-'joined by Chriſtianity, and enforced 'by the example of our great Law-'giver himſelf. Did we, my dear, ad-'dreſs a ſtern and rigorous tyrant, a 'gloomy terror and awful dread might 'juſtly hang upon our ſpirits; but how 'great is the difference, when inſpired 'by gratitude, and prompted by the 'glow of filial love, we addreſs a Be-'ing whoſe all-commanding goodneſs 'demands our utmoſt eſteem, our higheſt 'complacency! Surely it muſt then 'be accompanied with a moſt ſublime 'and rational delight!

'I know it is objected that, as we 'can inform the Deity of nothing but 'what he knew before, and can aſk him 'for nothing but what his original 'goodneſs will prompt him to grant 'without our petitioning for it, prayer 'muſt be, in it's own nature, abſurd 'and impertinent.

'It is true, that this duty makes no 'change in God; it is true he will grant, 'without our petitions, what it is fit for 'infinite Beneficence to give, and us to 'receive: but it is as true, that the 'exerciſe of this duty, by changing the 'diſpoſitions of the mind, changes that 'fitneſs; as the humble ſupplicant is an 'object more worthy of the Divine bleſ-'ſing and protection, than the man 'whom no ſenſe of duty can fix, and 'no obligations bind. Does it not 'exalt, refine, and elevate the mind, by 'leading it to the contemplation of the 'moſt ſublime and important truths? 'Does it not call away the heart from 'the purſuit of folly and madneſs? 'Does it not raiſe the ſoul to the God 'of virtue, and, conſequently, to vir-'tue itſelf? Does it not check the growth 'of pride, ſelf-ſufficiency, and malice? 'Does it not keep awake the tender ſen-'timents of humanity, our gratitude 'to our Maker, our affection to our 'friends?'

'Enough, my dear Lucius,' here I cried; 'enough. I own myſelf con-'quered; my reluctance is vaniſhed.'

You muſt know, Madam, it was at the cloſe of the day when Lucius deſired me to walk out; and, as the ſun was then ſetting, it began to grow dark: we therefore went into the thickeſt part of a tuft of trees, where we might ſafely remain unobſerved; when, like the firſt

happy

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happy pair, we presented our evening orisons, which, for the future, were commonly performed in my chamber. When we came to remove, it was resolved that this duty should be performed twice a day in the family; and, on this account, we chose the most sober young people we could find for our servants. I dare say, we have more order and decency observed in our family, than in any other within ten miles round us. We seldom omit going to church twice every Sunday; not so much to gain any new acquisition of knowledge, as to keep alive a sense of our duty, and, at the same time, to set an example to the rest of the parish; the lower part of which are greatly influenced by what they see us great folks, as they call us, do: for here, with respect to example, one or two thousand pounds a year has a thousand times more efficacy than all the advantages of superior sense and reason.

You have now two letters since I received your last; and if they do not give your ladyship the vapours, I may be in hopes that you will, in time, be good for something else, besides giving felicity to one man, pleasure to a few friends, and happiness to a number of dependants: you may in that case, I say, become ridiculous enough to exercise the wit, and exhaust the spirits, of your gay companions; but you will never have the honour, like me, to find a friend who will, with such sparkling wit and fine address, endeavour to laugh you out of your religion. I have the honour to be your ladyship's very humble servant,

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XXXI.

IN order to introduce this letter, Madam, it is necessary for me to inform you, that my father, before he took his leave of us, had several times hinted to Lucius, that it would be no disadvantageous employment for him to learn the characters and manners of his tenants, and even of the poor, residing on his estate; that he ought particularly to enquire into their circumstances; and that, as his interest was closely connected with theirs, to endeavour to serve them to the utmost of his power. As soon as my father was gone, Lucius resolved to pay them a visit, and yesterday began to put his design in execution, imagining that, as he was yet quite unknown, he might be the better able to inform himself to his satisfaction. Last night, after his return, I learned his success; and as he happened upon some adventures in this expedition worth relating, I shall give them to you while they are yet fresh in my memory.

He set out soon after it was light, dressed but meanly, and with only one servant out of livery, and rode to a farm-house, at about two miles distance; where, entering the yard, he dismounted, knocked at the door, and asked for the master, who came running from the stable, and, in a surly manner, demanded what he wanted. Lucius desired to be informed if he knew any body that could supply him with a load of hay. This question at once civilized the farmer, who before seemed resolved to behave in a very brutal manner; but the bargain being soon made, Lucius went in to pay, and the farmer to receive his money; when a mug of ale being brought, the latter, after a good hearty draught, became in an instant one of the most sociable fellows in the universe; he shook Lucius twenty times by the hand, with a freedom as great as if it had been authorized by a long acquaintance. Having entertained him, for half an hour together, with the price of corn and cattle at the market, Lucius, with the air of a stranger, enquired about his farm, and asked him who was his landlord; when he began in the following manner—

'Yo mun know, meester, that I ha' 'got a new lonlord; I doant know who 'he is, but they say he has married one of 'your Lonon ladies, who, they say, 'has a mort o' money: besides, they 'say, he is one o' those good-natured 'foo's, look'e, that will do ony mon a 'service that axes him, thof he never 'sead him aw his born days: and be-'sides, I believe the grey mare is the 'better horse; for he is meety fond of 'his lady, never stirs from whome, and 'never gets drunk. Now my dame 'says, that such a lonlord as this'n is fit 'to be impcsed upon; but I doant mind 'what sha says, for I am meester in my 'own house, and weant be contradicted 'by the best woman that wears a heead. 'No, no; let Tummus Clod aloan for 'that: before I'd be like my lonlord, 'I'd hong myself.'

'You are in the right, my friend,' replied Lucius, laughing; 'always take 'care to be maſter in your own houſe.' —'Ey, ey,' rejoined the courageous farmer; 'I am a wife mon, I can tell ye 'that; and a ſcollard too, for I can 'reead and write; and I was one whoale 'month in my accidancy, and larn'd 'ſomething about parts of ſpeeach, and 'neauns and prunams, and I hardly 'know what myſelf.'—'I believe it,' cried Lucius. 'You are a great man; 'and may be as great a man as your 'landlord yet, for aught I know.'

'Odzookers, gi' me your hond again!' cried the farmer, delighted with the compliment; 'yo'r an honeſt felley, I'll 'be ſworn: but here's to ye heartily. 'But, as I was ſaying, my lonlord is a 'ſoft ſort of a mon; and ſo, as I owe 'hauf a year's rent to my old lonlord, I 'have a mind my new lonlord ſhould 'pey it; but you munno ſay one thing 'of it.'—'O no,' replied Lucius, 'I 'won't ſay any thing of it, without you 'tell your new landlord of it yourſelf.'— 'No, no; who would be foo' then?' rejoined the farmer. 'I only ſell a few 'trees, that were ſtonding on the lond 'time out o' mind; and which I ſhould 'no' do by reet, a cauſe they were men'tioned in my leaſe.'—'Well, but as 'to the honeſty of the thing, friend 'Thomas,' cried Lucius, 'how do you 'reconcile that?'—'Honeſty!' replied Clod; 'why, as to that, meſter, you 'know we mun live. It is true, I am 'pretty well to paſs; but a mon ſhould 'take care o' his family; and ye know, 'what the eye does no' ſee, the heart 'does no' rue, as the proverb goes; and 'a little out of a mickle is no' miſs'd.' —'But pray,' ſaid Lucius, 'how much 'may the trees you have cut down be 'worth?'—'Why look'e, my lad,' replied the farmer, 'a hundred pound; 'and ſo I ſhall ha' ten paund in my 'pocket, for my trouble; that yo know 'is but fair.'—'For your trouble!' cried Lucius; 'that is very extraor'dinary.'—'Why yo know,' rejoined the booby, 'a mon ſhould be paid for 'his labour; and beſides, ſuch a hen'peck'd——'

Here his wife entered, who, it ſeems, had overheard ſome part of this fine diſcourſe; and giving him a look of contempt—'You are a wife felley,' cried ſhe, 'to tell aw ye'r affairs to a ſtrean'ger! Ah! ye aud foo', if I had no 'more wit than yo, ye might have been 'hanged before now.'—'Nay, daam,' cried he, 'doent ſcold; ye know that ye 'adviſ'd me to it. I had no' ſel'd the 'trees, if ve had 'no' made me.'— 'I made ye!' cried ſhe, colouring, and coming a ſtep or two nearer; 'I made 'ye! I made ye tell of it too, did I? 'Anſwer me that; do, dunce, do. This 'mon, for ouwt yo know, may tell 'Squire Monly.'—'No, no,' cried he, trembling, 'he looks like an honeſt fel'ley.'—'An honeſt felley, ye raſcal! 'an honeſt felley is a very proper per'ſon to tell that yo are a rogue. O 'that ever I ſhould be yoaked to a foo'!' —'I am no more a foo' than other folks,' cried he, juſt loud enough to be heard. 'Than other folks, ye blockhead!' ſhe rejoined, as loud as ſhe could bawl; 'I 'ſuppoſe yo mean me. I a fool, ye 'dog!—There, take that;' and here ſhe ſeized the mug, and throwing it at her huſband, it flew over his head, whilſt the liquor was pretty equally divided between all the three. She now burſt into tears, ſobbing out—'Caw me a foo', 'ye barbers mon yo; I doant deſerve to 'be treated a this'n, I doant, ye wicked 'munſter yo.'

Lucius here ſlipped out, and calling his ſervant, the *honeſt courageous* farmer followed him to the door, ſcratching his head; but looking behind him, and ſeeing his wife ſeated in a chair at the other end of the room, he whiſpered—'It is 'well you were here, meaſter, or I be'lieve I ſhould ha' murdered her.' Lucius made no anſwer; but mounting, and riding off, told him he would ſend a waggon for his hay; and immediately went to take a view of the devaſtation made among his trees, when he found eighteen or twenty of the largeſt oaks lying ready to be carried away.

Agreeable as this diſcovery might appear, Lucius was under ſome perplexity, on thinking how he ought to proceed with the farmer. He now viſited ſeveral of his other tenants, from whom he learned nothing worth mentioning. They were, in general, honeſt, plain men, blunt, and extremely ignorant: and afterwards paid a viſit to the miniſter of the pariſh, with whom he dined. On his return home, he obſerved, at a ſmall diſtance from the road, a farm-houſe belonging to the ſame manor; hither he went, and entering without ceremony, thought he obſerved a wildneſs in the looks of the people, that ſeemed to expreſs a good deal of fear and apprehenſion.

sion. At first, he fancied he might be known, but he was soon of a different opinion; for the woman rising from her seat, with a trembling voice asked what he wanted; and, in the same instant, the husband slipped out at the back-door. Lucius replied, that he was very sorry if his being there gave them any uneasiness; and, so far from doing them any hurt, he would serve them to the utmost of his power. The woman eyed him very attentively, and stood for some time silent, which only served to increase his curiosity; at last she thanked him, and asked again what he wanted. 'Want!' said he; 'why, you behave so oddly, that I 'want to know what is the matter. You 'look like a good sort of a woman,' added he, 'and I should be glad to drink a dish 'of tea with you, which I had rather have 'here than at a publick house.'—'Lack-'a-day,' said she, 'we never drink ta; 'but yo shall be welcome, if yo'll send 'for it, and cook it yo'r self; for I 'doant well know how to go about it.' On this Lucius gave her a guinea; the tea and sugar were bought, and a tea-pot and two earthen cups and saucers borrowed; but when the change was brought to Lucius, he gave it amongst the children. This entirely won the good woman's heart; she now lost all her fears; and, at his request, readily ran to call her husband; who was no sooner seated, than Lucius informed him, that he was a gentleman who had a pretty estate in that part of the country, but, as he was upon a frolick, he did not chuse to tell his name. He then urged the farmer to let him know the cause of that disorder which, on his entering the house, was visible in all their countenances.

'You great folks,' cried the honest man, 'have no notion of the misfor-'tunes and cares that sometimes fall 'upon us, who are forced to struggle 'hard to get an honest living. One 'bad season puts us back so far, that 'several good ones can hardly repair our 'losses. This, master, is my case. 'About four years ago, I had a rot 'among my sheep, which killed above 'hauf, and those the best o' my flock; 'and as my corn proved bad, I could 'no' pay my rent: this put me behind 'hond, which my lonlord excused, and 'promised not to distress me; but as he 'is dead, and the lond sold to one Squire 'Monley, his executors, as they conno' 'seize my stock, threaten to throw me 'into jail, for the hauf year that is still 'due. This makes me o' most distracted. There is near a quarter due 'to my new lonlord, and if they should 'let me alone, I know no' when I shall 'be able to pey him. But, werriday*, 'I ha' no hopes that they will forbear 'any longer. Though my fears keep 'me awake, I every morning dread the 'leet; and when I rise, I tremble to 'think that, perhaps, the next neet I 'may lig in a prison; and when it grows 'dark, I am glad that once more I 'shall sleep in mine own bed, and be 'secure till morning. Sunday is, in-'deed, a happy dey; I then enjoy my 'security, but as the neet comes on, 'my fears return. O master, it breaks 'my heart to think what will become of 'my poor family, which you see is 'none of the smallest! I am a feard to 'go about my work. I tremble at the 'feet of a stroanger. I hardly know 'what to do. In short, I am o' most 'mad.'

Lucius was so extremely affected at the moving expressive tone, and the artless simplicity with which the poor man told his distress, that he could scarcely refrain from tears; and it was with much difficulty that he concealed his concern.

'Well, but suppose you should tell 'your case to your new landlord,' said Lucius; 'if you can give him proof that 'you are an honest man, he may, per-'haps, take the debt upon himself, and, 'rather than lose a good tenant, give 'you time for payment. I know him, 'he is a good-natured man, and I dare 'say he will not be hard upon you.'

'No, no,' replied the unhappy man; 'I could sooner dee than do it. I could 'never speak freely to such a rich mon. 'I am not used to such company. Be-'sides, it would signify nothing. It is 'a miserable life to be all as in fear.'

'Now I have thought of something,' cried Lucius, with a forced smile, 'that 'I am sure will do. Have you not some 'timber growing on your land?'—'Yes,' returned the farmer; 'but what 'then?'—'Why, I'll tell you,' replied Lucius; 'suppose you cut it down and 'sell it, and pay your debt with the

* A word of nearly the same meaning as Well-a-day.

'money; Mr. Manly will never miss 'it.'

The farmer here held up his hands, and his wife examined him more narrowly, and, if possible, with greater terror than before. At last, the honest man starting up, as if affronted, shocked and insulted, cried—'Get out o' my 'house, ye villain; do ye tak me for a 'rogue?' And here he seized a large oak sapling, that stood in the chimney corner. Lucius got up, and was beginning to speak in his own defence; but he had hardly opened his lips, when he was interrupted, 'Yo a gentleman! 'yo the devil!'—'Ay,' cried the wife, 'it is the devil sure enough, for all he 'has hid his cloven foot. Here, gi' 'me the money,' cried she to the children; 'there, tak yo'r curst money,' added she, throwing it at him; every gesture expressing the fright and agitation of her mind. Lucius endeavoured in vain to speak; 'Get out,' was still repeated; and the husband holding up his sapling, advancing, cried—'I'll 'see if he be the devil or no.' On this, poor Lucius retreating backwards, tumbled over the threshold into the yard, and the door was immediately clapped to, and locked. He received, however, not the least damage by the fall, except what his coat and wig sustained; for a heap of friendly dung, that had been kindly raised by some cows and horses, received the fallen, though formidable Lucius. But, though his bed was soft, it was not a fit place to rest in; he arose therefore immediately, when he overheard the poor honest man cry out to himself—'God forbid that I should be 'such a villain, as this fellow would ha 'me be. I'd go to a jail first. If I 'am miserable, I am honest at least, and 'after aw, that is some comfort.' Mean while the servant who was walking in the yard, seeing Lucius in this disorder, ran to his assistance; but, finding him already upon his legs without speaking a word, in a moment broke the door, which it seems was a very slight one, to pieces. The woman was unhappily fainted away in a chair, and the good man was assisting her; him he seized by the collar, and in an instant threw up his heels, and was preparing to revenge the abuse done to his master, when Lucius put aside the blow, and with difficulty dragged him away, for he quitted his hold with much reluctance. But they had hardly mounted their horses, when the farmer's son and a servant man and maid who had heard the bustle, the two first from the stable, and the last from the dairy, came running to the field of battle. A speedy retreat was absolutely necessary, for this was now an improper time to hold a parley; they, therefore, having gained the gate of the yard, set spurs to their horses, and were soon out of sight.

Thus, Madam, I have given you the history of one day's ramble; and, if nothing prevents, I shall very speedily send you the sequel of the story of these two farmers, with such opposite characters: mean time, I am very much your ladyship's, &c.

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XXXII.

YOU think it strange, Madam, that though Lucius should relate the discourse of the farmers in the dialect of the country, I should have memory sufficient to retain the pronunciation; and from this remark you infer, that I have had more regard to your diversion than to the veracity of an historian. But here you are greatly mistaken; you ought to consider the difficulty of living in the country, without catching the peculiarities of the language. This I have sufficiently obtained, so that I have nothing more to do than to remember the words; the pronunciation I have already. I have a good deal of the country accent in my ordinary conversation, and whenever I am disposed to it, can talk in the true dialect almost as fluently as the sprightly milkmaid, or the wife of a ploughman.

The day after the adventure of the two farmers, I was no sooner stirring than I heard an unusual bustle below stairs, and several persons talking very loud, with some sounds, which, though I could not perfectly understand, seemed to express great amazement. My woman could give me no satisfaction; I therefore desired her to ring the bell, when a servant entered the room, with as much terror in her looks as if she had just seen a ghost, 'What is the matter, 'Mary?'

'Mary?' said I; 'you look frighted.'—'O law, Madam,' cried she, 'wud you* think it! Did you ever hear the like? The devil has appeared to my † neam and my naunt Saunders, and teld them, that as how—as how——' 'As how what?' returned I. 'Why as how,' continued she, 'he wud ha him cut down aw the 'squire's trees, and he wud gi' him a power o' money for them; and he gived them some money, which was, I suppose, for arnest; but they wud no' tak' it. Indeed, Madam, it is true; for, I verily believe, we shall ha' the w'oll story in print.'—'Pho, pho, is that all?' cried I; 'it is an idle tale, take my word for it. Pray, what sort of a devil was it?'—'O! he was a meety civil devil at first,' said she, 'and as like a honsome man as ever you seed; but, at last, he vanished out o' the door, as one may say, in a flash o' fire; and then they ‡ made the door after him, when an ugly devil came pop through the key-hole, and wud fean ha' murdered the good mon; but the hondsome devil poo'd him away, and wud no' let him; but, as they went out, they had like to ha takken the side o' the house wi' em; for the doore was broken aw to pieces, and to be sure there was a great smell of brimstone. I mar'l whether the handsome devil had no' great saucer een, when my neam was going to strike him; for Goody Simple says, sha thinks sha heard say as much. But the ugly devil had two great platter een, like balls of fire, and turned into the terribleft creature that ever was seen.'—'There is nothing in it, Mary,' said I; 'I am sure of it.'—'Nay, Madam,' said she, 'to be sure you know best, and I am a'most o' your mind; for though they say, Old Nick can dizen himself like an angel of leet, yet yo know as how he can never go without his cloven foot; and Betty Saunders looked wi' aw the een in her head, but cou'd na see it. But, methinks, it is a pitty such a fine story shu'd no' be true; for, of aw things, I like to hear about ghosts, and haunted housin, and such like. Our Robin, Madam, loffed at Goody Simple, and said shu was a lying awd witch, and talked as thof' he would kick her out o' the house; but we wud no let him; and then he flew into a passion, and said his een were no more like platters, nor balls of fire, than hern, and if shu said it agen, he wud kick her a—; breech, I mean, saving your presence.' Here she dropped a curtsey. 'But,' continued she, 'we could no tell what to mak o' that; for the squire came in, and said—"Hush, "not a word, Robin;" and then staid to hear the woman himself, while she eat the meat I giv'd her quietly, and made me fetch her a mug of ale.'

'Well,' said I, 'I have enough of this idle stuff; tell John he must go and bring Mrs. Saunders to me.' Here Lucius appeared, and added—'And her husband too; and bid him be sure to tell him he must not be frighted; for I have some good news for him.' And then coming to me, as Mary left the room—'Well, my dear,' said he, 'you find I am mounted on the wings of fame; Mary, I suppose, has given you a full account.'—'O yes,' said I, 'they are resolved to make a devil of you; they have already collected some diabolical circumstances; and I don't doubt but, before night, they will have dressed up you, and your man, with all the terrors that the most wild imagination can invent.'—'No matter,' said Lucius, 'though they paint me in the character of a devil, the portrait they give of me is so unlike the original, that I shall never be known by it. If poor Robin is already such a monster, what must he be by tomorrow morning, when the story will be spread through the whole county, and every one has added some dreadful circumstance to the fiction? Horns and hoofs will be the least of his deformities. Had the old woman staid till then, before she brought us the

* *You*, in this county, carries with it something of the idea of a compliment, as expressing more respect than *Yo*; and for this reason, husbands and wives in particular, who, on common occasions, politely as they think, make use of the word *You*, whenever they quarrel, constantly contract it into *Yo*.

† My neam, and my naunt; other counties say, gaffer and gammer.

‡ Shut the door.

'news,

'news, poor Robin would have gaped, 'and ſtared, and wondered, with the 'reſt. However, I am glad the honeſt 'farmer is ſent for. The poor man's 'diſtreſſes have touched me very nearly, 'and ſomething muſt be done for him. 'I intended to ſend to him this after-'noon, but I am better pleaſed that I 'ſhall ſee him this morning, ſince he 'will now have a few hours taken from 'his anxiety, and added to his hap-'pineſs.'—'A valuable conſideration,' ſaid I, 'that ought not to be forgot, 'whenever we intend to confer an ob-'ligation.'

In about two hours time, the honeſt farmer made his appearance on horſe-back, with his wife behind him, freſh ſhaved, and both dreſſed out in their Sunday's garb. All the ſervants, in an inſtant, ran out to ſee them, except my woman, and Robin, who was purpoſely ſent out of the way, on a meſſage to Nottingham; for they had been informed of their coming by John, who returned near an hour before. They diſmounted at the door, when a volley of queſtions were in a moment diſcharged from every mouth, to which it was impoſſibe for either of them to anſwer. This Lucius and I obſerved from the dining-room window. I immediately went down, and found that the men had now ſurrounded the farmer, and the maids his wife, whom they all viewed with looks of aſtoniſhment, all deſirous of being anſwered firſt, as thinking their own queſtion of the moſt conſequence. I ſtood in the hall near a minute, to obſerve this ridiculous ſcene; but, whatever anſwer they had received, I obſerved a general air of diſſatisfaction, almoſt as great as that which appeared immediately after; when, in order to draw the good couple from the clamour of this tormenting perſecution, I ordered them to be conducted into a back parlour facing the garden; and I could hear diſtinctly, as they ſeparated, one cry—'No een of fire!' Another—'No cloven foot!' And, from different voices—'No horns! No 'tail! No nothing, I think. It's a 'pity! Ah! what a fine ſtory is here 'come to nought!'

They had been in the parlour about two minutes when I went to them: I found them ſtanding; but taking a chair myſelf, inſiſted upon their being ſeated, which, after ſome clumſey ſcrapes from the one, and as aukward curtſies from the other, they at laſt complied with; but ſat together, cloſe up to the wall, in the moſt diſtant corner of the room. As ſoon as this ceremonial was over, which laſted ſome time—for theſe country people certainly think good manners conſiſts in being troubleſome.—'Mrs. Saunders,' ſaid I, 'they tell very ſtrange 'things of you. You have been deal-'ing with the devil it ſeems; at leaſt he 'has been paying you a viſit.'—'Who, 'I deal with the devil?' cried the good woman, in a fright; 'Lord help me! I 'hope I ha' nothing to do wi' him.'—'I hope ſo too,' ſaid I; 'but, pray what 'foundation is there for this ſtrange 'ſtory?' Here ſhe related it, in much the ſame manner that Lucius had done, only omitting her huſband's account of his misfortunes, and making uſe of the terms, Handſome devil, and Ugly devil, to make a diſtinction between them: but ſhe miſtook one circumſtance; which indeed had, as ſhe underſtood it, a very diabolical appearance; for ſhe aſſerted, that the laſt time Lucius and Robin entered the houſe, they came in through the key-hole, and broke the door to pieces as they went out. But here the huſband interpoſed, and ſet her right; when ſhe apologized for her miſtake, by ſaying, that ſhe ſaw the door locked before ſhe fainted away, and when ſhe came to herſelf, ſhe found it broke to pieces; and as ſhe was before pretty ſure it was the devil, ſhe thought it moſt natural for him to come in at the key-hole, and to take the ſide of the houſe, or the door at leaſt, away with him, when he went out; for this ſhe remembered to have heard, when a child, was his cuſtom. And ſhe concluded with aſſuring me, that ſhe would not tell a lye about it. 'I believe ſo,' ſaid I, 'and I am very well pleaſed with your 'ſincerity; for, as I know the ſtory 'better than you, you could not have 'deceived me.'—'That is very ſtrange,' cried the honeſt man, with a look of amazement. 'Know it better than we! 'Why, Madam, you was no' in my 'houſe too!'—'If it be ſtrange,' ſaid I, 'it is true; but I heard a very dif-'ferent ſtory this morning.'—'Why, as 'to the matter of that, Madam,' cried the wife, 'folks tell ſo many lyes about 'it, that I am aſheamed to hear them: 'and wud you think it? they are angry

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'at me, a cauſe I weant ſey as they ſey, 'and wull ha' it their own wey, whether I wull or no.'

'Well, that is not your fault,' ſaid I; 'but you ſhould not have ſo readily 'imagined it to be an evil ſpirit. Nor 'ſhould you, Mr. Saunders, have been 'ſo ready to conclude him a rogue. 'You ought at leaſt to have heard what 'he had to ſay in his own defence, for 'it was not without reaſon that he made 'the propoſal of your cutting down 'Mr. Manly's trees. You may take 'my word for it that you are both miſtaken. I know every particular of the 'ſtory. You, Mr. Saunders, gave a 'very moving account of your misfortunes to a very worthy gentleman, the 'perſon you call the handſome devil. 'He heartily pitied you: he reſolved to 'ſerve you; and I aſſure you, that you 'may now ſleep ſecurely, and awake 'without dread; for he hath pleaded 'your cauſe ſo effectually to Mr. Manly, 'that he has promiſed to take the debt 'upon himſelf, and to wait till you can 'conveniently pay him.' The farmer lifted up his eyes, and in an extaſy, cried out—'God bleſs 'in!' and then ſeemed endeavouring to ſay more, but ſtopped, as if the ſtruggle in his breaſt between joy and gratitude choaked up his voice: however, ſome tears, at leaſt as expreſſive as words, ſtood ready to fall from his eyes, which, with once or twice turning aſide his head, he wiped away with the back of his hand. Mean while, the good woman cried out, in a ſhrill key—'A handſome devil! A handſome angel! 'God reward him, and the 'ſquire to 'boot.' But what made the elevation of her voice more remarkable, was the low trembling diffidence with which ſhe ſpoke before. There was now a ſilence of at leaſt half a minute, which ended in the old woman's burſting out a crying, which ſhe did moſt heartily, repeating ſeveral times, with her hand on her huſband's knee, and her eyes fixed very affectionately on his—'Well, I was never 'ſo glad in aw my life—no, never in aw 'my life.' At laſt the farmer cried, lifting up his eyes, and looking at me—'An angel! aye, an angel indeed! or, 'after aw the uſage I ha' gi'n him—— 'Well, God's bleſſing leet upon you 'aw!'—'I thank you, Mr. Saunders,' ſaid I, 'if you reckon me among the 'number. But here comes either your 'landlord or your friend.'

Lucius, who had been walking in the garden, in order to give me time to prepare them to ſee him, was now coming up an avenue facing the door; but, at the mention of the word Landlord, I obſerved that the poor man's diffidence and reſerve, which began to wear off, immediately returned, and his features in a moment became contracted: perhaps his joy was damped by the very idea of a perſon whom he had before conſidered only as an object of fear. But, however this be, not the leaſt alteration appeared in the wife, except a little female ambition, or rather that regard for decency and decorum of character, which is as viſible in the ſpruce dairy-maid as in the dutcheſs. She therefore took her eyes from her huſband, and her hand from his knee, laid ſmooth her clean though coarſe white apron, pulled down lower a pair of old-faſhioned ruffles, and ſtroaked her hair under her cap: and this was done with the natural motion, and compoſed look, which ſometimes makes all the diſtinction between theſe actions, when performed by a country houſewife, and the more affected airs of ſome lady of diſtinction.

Lucius now opened the door; when I cried—'O Sir, is it you? I have pre-'pared them to ſee you; and you may 'ſafely come in, without being taken 'for a devil.' And then addreſſing myſelf to the farmer—'Here is your friend,' ſaid I; 'do you know him, now he has 'changed his dreſs?' Lucius returned my compliment; and then running to the farmer, who was ſtanding biting his hat by the ſide of his wife—'My ho-'neſt friend,' ſaid he, 'I am glad to 'ſee you. Well, are you diſpoſed to 'knock me down now?' The farmer ſcraped, the wife curtſied, and both begged his pardon. 'Well,' replied he, 'you find I don't reſent your treatment 'of me. But, Madam, won't you fa-'vour me with a glaſs of wine, to drink 'to my new friends?' added he, turning to me. 'To be ſure,' ſaid I, and rung the bell; on which a ſervant coming, the wine was called for, and being brought, the man was ordered to retire. Lucius filled, and taking the farmer by the hand, wiſhed him happier days; and having each of them drank their glaſs, he deſired the honeſt man to take a turn or two with him in the garden; and at the ſame time begged the favour of me to go with them, alledging, that I might leave my woman to keep Mrs. Saunders company.

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As this ſtory of the appearance of the devil had ſpread with wonderful ſwiftneſs through the country, Lucius was unwilling it ſhould be known that he had any hand in it: and, indeed, he had not the leaſt ambition of being diſtinguiſhed among the country gentlemen by the name of the Handſome Devil; a title which would be inevitably given him, was he known to be the principal actor. And beſides, as he had more tenants to viſit, he would not have it mentioned that he had ever viſited any of them, ſince the reſt might expect to ſee him in the ſame manner, and being put upon their guard, might fruſtrate his deſign of penetrating into their characters, manners, and circumſtances. Theſe motives were the riſe of this preconcerted plot, of making him appear rather as the friend of Lucius, than as Lucius himſelf, before the farmer's wife; whom, though a very good ſort of a woman, he was unwilling to truſt with a ſecret of ſuch conſequence.

We were no ſooner in the garden, than the farmer, addreſſing himſelf to Lucius, ſaid—'You mun excuſe me; 'I conno' thank you as I wud. If you 'could read my thowts, there wud be 'no need of words to tell you my joy, 'my ſurprize, my gratitude. But ye 'mun forgi' me, if I ſay I love you: 'for it is no' my fault; I conno' help it. 'And this lady mun forgive me too. 'Our ladies are ſo proud, they weant 'ſpeak to a poor mon; but ſhu is ſo 'good, ſo free, and the meſſenger of ſuch 'good news, that I conno' help loving 'her; and my heart will ſay, in ſpight 'o' me, "God bleſs her, and my kind "freend!" and e'en let it ſay ſo and it 'wull; for if I did no' gi' my heart this 'vent, I verily believe it wud burſt. 'I never preyd ſo heartily in aw my 'born days, and never ſaid prayers wi' 'hauf the pleaſure I ſay theſe two or 'three words. You have made a new 'mon o' me: I verily believe I could 'o'moſt pray for you as well as a par'ſon; aye, as well as thof I read in a 'book. Thank you, thank you.'—'God bleſs you too,' we both replied, at the ſame time, with a ſatisfaction, though leſs tumultuous, as delightful, at leaſt, as his. And indeed, the poor man appeared raiſed above himſelf; the tranſports of his joy, by getting a vent in words, ſeemed to become more exquiſite. He talked with a greater volubility of ſpeech; to which a half-pint glaſs of wine, which he had lately drank, might perhaps contribute. His eyes ſparkled with affectionate gratitude, and a kind of delightful rapture ſeemed hovering over every lineament of his countenance.

The good man was now ſilent; but, after a ſhort pauſe, reſumed—'Is this the 'mon I turned out o' my houſe? Is 'this he that I was yeaſterday going to 'ſtrike? Well, no matter; had I uſed 'him kindly, I ſhud no' ha' know'd 'him ſo well. I wud ha' done ony honeſt thing for him, for ſaving me from 'a jeyl; I wud ha' look'd upon him as 'my beſt freend. It wud ha' been a 'kind action, and I ſhud ha' remembered it as long as I lived; but methinks I ſhud no' ha' loved him ſo 'weel as I do now. But, good Sir, 'are you ſure Squire Monly weant be 'hard upon me?'—'Never fear it,' replied I; 'I will anſwer for your land'lord.' He thanked me; and then looking at Lucius, cried—'My generous 'friend, mun not I know to whom I 'am obliged? Mun not I know your 'neame?'—'O yes,' replied Lucius, 'this you ſhall ſoon know; but I muſt 'deſire you to keep it a ſecret, and not 'to let even your wife or ſon know that 'my name is Manly.'—'What, my 'lonlord himſelf!' cried he, in a rapture; 'then indeed I ha' nothing to 'fear. My lonlord that I have abuſed! 'my lonlord that is ſo generous!—I 'can only wonder. What ſhall I do 'for you? How mun I mak you amends?'—'Leave that to me,' Lucius replied. 'Here are forty guineas, that I have in 'my pocket for you, to pay the execu'tors of your late landlord, which you 'muſt do this evening, before you go; 'you may give me a note for the mo'ney, and I will contrive a way for you 'to pay it again.' I then took my turn; and telling him, that as he had been ſo diſtreſſed, he and his family might want ſome of the common neceſſaries of life; to ſupply which, I deſired his acceptance of five guineas; which he received, bowing low, with a ſubmiſſive kind of joy and rapture. Lucius now gave him an account of his going to Thomas Clod's, and of his telling him that he had cut down his trees: but, as he was yet undetermined how to proceed with him, deſired him to keep a ſtrict watch, that none of them were removed, and no more cut down, without giving him immediate

mediate notice; adding, that he would pay him handſomely for his trouble: and dinner being now ready, the farmer went in, and rejoined his wife. They both dined at our table; and after Lucius had again privately enjoined the good man to ſecrecy, they, with many warm, though homely teſtimonies of gratitude, took their leave. I am, Madam, your ladyſhip's moſt affectionate friend,

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XXXIII.

DEAR MADAM,

LUCIUS has been again among his tenants, and has now finiſhed his ramble. The laſt time he was out upon this expedition, he obſerved a man with white locks, and a venerable aſpect; but want and care, rather than extreme old age, ſeemed to have ſilvered his hair: his eyes were hollow, his perſon tall and meagre, and he had a placid ſerenity in his countenance that beſpoke a kind of joyful compoſure of mind. His coat was of broad-cloth; and, though worn threadbare, and well patched, was perfectly clean. He was coming out of a houſe, with a bag in his hand, which he ſeemed deſirous to conceal. The oddneſs of his appearance, in a country village, joined to an air that ſeemed to command reſpect, engaged the attention of Lucius; who became curious enough to form a reſolution to know, if poſſible, who he was, and what that could be which he endeavoured to conceal; and therefore diſmounting, he led his horſe by the bridle, and followed at ſome diſtance, till he ſaw him enter a ſmall thatched houſe, and ſhut the door after him. Thither Lucius directed his ſteps, and, on his arrival, was going to knock at the door; when turning his head to the window, he obſerved the ſame perſon ſtanding before a table, and with his eyes lifted up to heaven with a look of thankfulneſs, utter a ſeemingly devout ejaculation, and then ſit down by the ſide of an elderly woman. He now gave a rap at the door with the butt-end of his whip; on which, as it happened not to be latched, it immediately flew open; when, to his great aſtoniſhment, he ſaw an earthen plate of grains ſmoaking on the table, which they endeavoured to conceal, by throwing the end of a ragged damaſk napkin, which ſerved for a table-cloth, over it, and immediately roſe up.

Lucius's ſurprize was hardly to be expreſſed. 'Is this,' ſaid he, 'what 'occaſioned ſuch marks of devotion, 'ſuch thankfulneſs and gratitude? Was 'it this that you were ſo deſirous to con-'ceal?'—'Yes,' replied the old man: 'but why ſhould you rudely preſs to 'diſcover what I was unwilling to have 'known? Why ſhould you thus mor-'tify the little pride that is left me?'—'I beg pardon,' ſaid Lucius, 'for an 'intruſion which I cannot juſtify; but 'ſatisfy my curioſity, and let me know 'by what terrible diſaſter you are drove 'to this dreadful extremity. Yet ſtay; 'let me firſt prevail upon you to provide 'ſome proviſions more fit for human 'creatures. You muſt have a great 'mind, to be able to ſupport ſuch want, 'and to rejoice over a meal that would 'make others of leſs piety repine at 'Providence. Though in the midſt of 'affluence, I could almoſt envy your 'reſignation, that beſpeaks you more 'than human. Accept of this, Sir,' continued Lucius, throwing down five guineas upon the table, 'and provide ſome-'thing more proper for your refreſh-'ments.' The old man, firſt lifting up his eyes to heaven, took up the money with an air of extreme thankfulneſs, accompanied with very polite expreſſions of gratitude; and immediately gave one of the pieces to his wife, who preſently returned with ſome beef-ſteaks and a loaf: however, in this interval they took their ſeats, and the old man began in the following manner—

'I don't wonder at your being ſur-'prized at a meal which, when I was 'of your age, would have given me 'equal aſtoniſhment; but want will 'make us reliſh the coarſeſt fare, and 'hunger ſweeten the moſt diſagreeable 'morſel. I was born a gentleman, but 'ſpent a good fortune in the ſervice of 'an ungrateful family, and, as I am now 'perſuaded, in a very bad cauſe. I am 'a native of Scotland, and was educated 'in the national religion; but, carried 'away by the heat of youth, and a ſet 'of ridiculous principles which I im-'bibed from ſome of my companions, 'I ſold my eſtate, and went over into 'Ireland, and entered as a volunteer in 'King James's army, where I fought 'in defence of a religion the moſt oppo-

'site to my own. But I must do myself the justice to say, that ambition was not my motive. I was present at the battle of the Boyne, and in almost every battle afterwards, in which my master distinguished himself by a superior cowardice. But I will not tire you with a repetition of what every body knows already. At the battle of Aghrim, when our army was entirely routed, it was with difficulty I made my escape; and, as I lost all my baggage, my fortune, which before was almost exhausted, was by this event entirely ruined. I returned into Scotland with a wife and two young children: and pleased with the hopes of seeing my relations, particularly a tender father, and a brother with whom I had been brought up from my infancy, I arrived at Kirkaldy, the place of my birth; where I found that my father died at London some time before. Here I soon experienced, that my wants, instead of entitling me to relief, only served as a pretence for treating me with contempt. Nay, my nearest relations hardly knew me. It was with difficulty that I got access even to my brother, though of the same political principles with myself. I was suffered to wait in the hall like a common servant. I was choaked with indignation, yet I smothered my resentment. In short, after only lying a night or two in his house, with a barbarity unknown to savages, I, with my wife and children, after many affronts, were *civilly* turned out of doors, and obliged to shift for ourselves.'—Strange effect of immoderate self-love!' said Lucius; 'in it's extremes the most odious of all the passions, and the most fruitful of mischief! How strong must it be, when it can thus cancel the sacred bond of nature, and dissolve the holy tie of brotherhood!'—'Aye, aye,' replied the old man; whoever is in want, let him apply to a stranger, and he will have no gall poured over the friendly morsel. If he is in distress, let him fly to his friend, and he will not be humbled with the contumely of a proud relation. I was now a stranger in the very town where I was born, and where I had spent the greatest part of my life. Stung to the quick with this indignity, and enraged beyond all possibility of bearing the place, my native country became hateful to me. I resolved to set out for England; and had it not been for the humanity of some persons, with whom I had a very slender acquaintance, and, particularly, a gentleman, a friend of my father's, who, with a chearful benevolence, that doubled the obligation, supplied me with what was necessary to bear the expence of my journey, I might, perhaps, have been driven to the extremity of begging my bread.

'You see, Sir,' continued he, 'that, amidst the greatest misfortunes, the contempt of my relations still sticks nearest my heart; not that it now gives me any great uneasiness, for my affection for them is converted into a calm and settled contempt. Yet, were our circumstances changed, I would still serve them to the utmost of my power. I would not, indeed, give them my esteem; this I reserve for the deserving.—But I tire you with my reflections.

'We arrived in London; and, by the assistance of a friend, I entered into trade; but by ridiculously lending my note to an acquaintance, the most pernicious and destructive custom that ever was introduced amongst tradesmen, I was reduced to very great extremities. However, these were at last surmounted, and, with a mixture of success and misfortune, I continued in the same station for upwards of twenty years: and, believe, me, Sir, abject as my condition now seems, it appears to me even preferable to the anxiety I then frequently felt, from the fear of duns, the dread of a jail, and the uneasy apprehension lest some honest man should lose by my misfortunes: the last, in particular, was a constant shock to my humanity; and where the person was in low circumstances, and had a family that, by my means, would be sufferers, the thought stung me to the soul, and gave me the most pungent anguish. Add to this, the many mortifications I received from the purse-proud tradesman, whose common maxim is, that *Every man may be rich if he will*; and that frequent breach of veracity, with respect to times of payment, which the necessity of my affairs sometimes rendered unavoidable. This last, a love of justice, and a fixed and steady regard for truth, rendered most irksome and painful: in

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'one word was a wound festering in 'my conscience.

'At last, I sold my stock, paid my 'debts, and retired to this place, with 'my wife and a boy of ten years old. I 'chearfully maintained my family by 'my labour while my strength lasted, 'and enjoyed a serenity that I cannot re-'member to have tasted in the midst of 'my early affluence. With a conscience 'undisturbed, and a mind free from care, 'I applied myself to reflection, and 'softened the fatigue of labour with 'large draughts of knowledge, with 'an improvement in piety, and the study 'of virtue and religion. I had before 'learned the ways of men; I now took 'a review of my own. I had long 'since imbibed the philosophy of the 'schools: I now reduced it to prac-'tice; and laying by my Seneca and 'Epictetus, applied myself to the study 'of the Scriptures, and to open my 'heart for the reception of those divine 'truths which lead the mind to God. 'Wrapped up in a happy solitude, I 'consider every thing here below only 'as it tends to my eternal welfare; and, 'while I grasp at an immortality of joy, 'find but little inconvenience from the 'coarseness and indelicacy of my poor 'repast. I have no other assistance but 'what I receive from my dear boy, 'who is now above twenty. With a 'filial affection he forces me to receive 'a good part of the fruits of his labour; 'but, alas! that is much too little to 'find him in cloaths, and us in the 'means of subsistence; and I am loth 'to have my wants known, lest this 'should again subject me to contempt; 'and more particularly, as it might 'prejudice his hopes; for he is exces-'sively fond of a farmer's daughter, 'who, though her father is a weak, and 'no very honest man, is very worthy 'of his affection. We have lived for 'some time on those sallads which the 'fields afford, but they are not now to 'be had. Young nettle-tops, boiled, 'were next our daily food: of these 'being tired, I some days ago tasted 'some fresh grains; I was hungry, and 'found them palatable, for what will 'not hunger make so? And, as I fre-'quently amuse myself with fishing, by 'which I sometimes gain a delicious 'repast, I am not suspected of wanting 'them for my own nourishment. This 'circumstance affords me no small plea-'sure, for all temporal happiness consists 'more in the opinion of others than on 'what we eat and drink.

'I have just mentioned my son to you; 'he is a lad of probity and integrity; 'and, if I may judge from the present 'you have just made me, you are in cir-'cumstances that will allow you to be 'of service to him; let me recommend 'him to your protection.'

Pity, Lucius says, was the least of all the passions which seized him, upon hearing this story; his compassion gave way to surprize and admiration; and the graceful manner with which this truly venerable man expressed himself, still heightened that esteem, which was justly raised by such exalted piety, such contentment and resignation. Lucius, therefore, very frankly replied, that he judged right as to his circumstance, but that he had not less inclination than ability to serve them all. He desired his friendship. He took him by the hand, and, with the strongest expressions of esteem, assured him, that he would do him all the service in his power. The steaks were now ready; and the good man asked him, if he would not do him the honour to partake of a meal which he himself had enabled them to provide. As Lucius had not dined, he very readily accepted the invitation, on condition that he and his son should dine with him the next day, when they would consider what could be done for the young man. This was immediately agreed to; and, while they were at table, Lucius desired him to explain several passages in his story, which he did not perfectly understand, and particularly, what he meant by lending of notes. This being done, the discourse again turned upon the hardships he suffered with respect to his way of living; hardships, which Lucius said were unknown to the rest of mankind, and which he could not think of without expressing the most lively marks of astonishment. The good man smiled. 'At first,' said he, 'this gave me some 'uneasy thoughts, but I soon learnt to 'conquer them, and to be thankful for 'the coarsest morsel. I represented to 'myself the excruciating tortures which 'rack numbers of mankind; and asked 'myself, what comparison could be 'made between exquisite pain and a 'mouthful of unpalatable provisions: I 'acknowledged the difference, and bless-'ed the Being that made our case pre-

'ferable to theirs. The hardships endured in sieges are much greater than ours; for, at the siege of Derry, a plate of grains would have been delicious fare. They would have looked upon this as a blessing, and shall I repine at what would have filled them with joy? Besides, could I have made my case known, which my aversion to the contempt which always attends poverty, and my regard for my son, has prevented, we might have lived in a much better manner; for whey, and butter-milk, would not have been refused me. My wife and I are both satisfied, and thoroughly convinced, that true happiness does not consist in such trifles as these: for, wherever there is inward complacency, humanity of heart, and devout thankfulness, there is content, there is the noblest felicity.'

'Tis very strange,' said Lucius; 'but whoever calls for assistance, is sure to meet with contempt and scorn from every ignorant blockhead; yet, there is a chain which runs through all nature, by which every species of beings have a dependence upon each other: but, let us view only man, that proud being, that, in spite of all the clearest dictates of reason, and all the laws and impulses of nature, would fain persuade himself that he stands alone, and free from obligations; wraps himself up in self-sufficiency, and refuses to confer on another what he imagines he does not want himself. The infant no sooner breathes, than, with a puling cry, he proclaims his wants, which the fond mother is, at first, but little able to relieve; he is, therefore, committed to strangers, and receives his first obligations from them: he grows up, and daily demands help from his parents; and, as his years increase, his dependance, and obligations, become more general, even for the means of life, the support of his very being, and the cultivation of his mind; till, at last, he becomes a debtor to thousands. If he is ashamed of this dependance, for the same reason he must be ashamed that he is a man: but if, after this, he refuses his assistance, or contemns him that stands in need of it, he is no longer a man, but a monster.'

'Fine reasons! fine reasons!' cried the old man, smiling; 'but you will never be able to persuade a miser, that avarice is a greater crime than poverty; or any body else, that to be poor is not to be contemptible.'—'There is no man so stupid,' said Lucius, 'as to believe that poverty is really criminal, or even contemptible: it is, indeed, in their opinion, a thing to be dreaded; not that they think it infectious, but for fear they should be asked for what they cannot give consistently with their notions of self-love, nor refuse without some inward commotions on the side of humanity. And, for this reason, those who, from an immoderate and false self-love, study to keep their humanity under, always take care, for their own sakes, to represent poverty to themselves as something ridiculous, mean, and contemptible. They are sensible of the amiableness of the friendly dispositions; and a fear of being suspected to want either them, or the abilities necessary for the exercise of them, may possibly be the principal reasons why the rich are ashamed of their poor relations; as it may be thought, that they themselves are either not so wealthy as is imagined, and, therefore, that they *cannot*, or that they have nothing really amiable in them, and therefore *will not*, relieve them. A kind of pride the most wicked in itself, and the most pernicious to society.

'Thus we may derive all the calumny that falls upon the unfortunate, from the same self-interested views; a struggle against the strong impressions of nature, an endeavour to suppress the more generous sentiments of humanity. From my little experience, I have found, that whenever a man fails, let his probity have been ever so conspicuous, it then becomes necessary that his conduct should be arraigned, and more particularly so by his relations, and the self-interested amongst his friends; for where no act of humanity is expected, the man may still remain esteemed. His virtues, such as industry, care, and application, are not what they look for; these, therefore, are thrown aside as useless lumber; but, if an act of humanity be found, though he was then in a capacity

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'to be generous, it is immediately 'thrown into the heap of follies; nor 'is there an indiscretion in his whole 'life that can be thought of, but it is 'mentioned, to increase the load. No 'wonder, then, that it becomes enor-'mous. Thus want of success, which 'no mortal can secure, is charged as 'guilt, and the unhappy honest man is 'treated with a hundred times more 'contempt and obloquy than the suc-'cessful villain. And self-love, shift-'ing the disgrace farther from itself, 'the relations of a husband throw the 'greatest load of blame on his wife, 'whilst those on her side cast it back 'on her husband.'

'Will she never have done?' methinks, Madam, I hear you say. 'Yes,' I answer. But you ought to remember, that I have been giving you the history of a hero in patience; and this should put your ladyship in mind, that it does not become you to express much uneasiness at such a trifle as the length of a letter; for I have nothing more to inform you of, but that Lucius, having dined heartily, took his leave, and, with the hopes of seeing the good man and his son the next day, jogged home. And, therefore, I am at liberty to break off, and subscribe myself, your ladyship's most sincere friend,

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XXXIV.

WELL, Madam, I have now seen this venerable old man, whose history I gave you in my last; and, I can assure you, he perfectly answers the description Lucius gave me of him. His son is a well-made, agreeable young fellow; and, though he finished his education in a country village, it seems has a good share of learning; but this is not at all surprising, as his father was his tutor. His behaviour has too much of the gentleman, for him ever to make a good clown; and he has too much bashfulness to pass for a gentleman. It was easy to see that he had never been in such company before; for he blushed whenever he was spoke to, and, when he answered, it was with as much diffidence, and precaution in placing his words, as if he had been before a magistrate. In short, if his sentiments are at all answerable to the ingenuity of his look, he, with his fair Daphne, or Amaryllis, might make a good figure in a pastoral eclogue.

After dinner, under the pretence of taking a walk in the garden, Lucius conducted us to a neat house, just on the outside of the back door, leading into the fields. He asked the good man how he liked it; and he, as he expected, admiring the situation, Lucius, in very polite terms, desired his acceptance of it for life. Our venerable guest received this favour with all imaginable testimonies of gratitude; while his son, by his looks, seemed in a rapture of joy: and, indeed, as it has only four rooms, that is, two on a floor, it is a mansion proper enough for an anchorite. Besides, Lucius has promised to furnish it; and I am to make him a present of as many books as he shall have occasion for; a catalogue of some of which I have engaged our hermit himself to write out for me.

While they were taking a view of this small building, a servant came to inform us, that the farmer, who had been here some days before, desired to speak with his master. Lucius immediately gave orders that he should be admitted. The honest man came, and stepping aside with him, informed him, that the trees, which he had been ordered to watch, were to be removed the next day. At this news, Lucius sent for Clod, with orders that he should come directly, and bring his counter lease. Lucius had before related the whole affair to Mellifont, and he again to a gentleman of the law, who has an estate in this part of the country: he strenuously asserted, that he ought to undergo the penalty mentioned in his contract; that is, to pay one hundred pounds, to forfeit his lease, and to make good the damage; and that lenity, in this case, would be an ill precedent with respect to the other tenants: whilst Lucius was of opinion, that as the whole affair had been told to him in confidence, his honour would not permit him to proceed to extremities; and the good old man, to whom he now told the story, without mentioning the farmer's name, was of the same opinion; but could not help smiling at the silly fellow's talking of being paid for his trouble, in cutting down trees that he had no right to meddle with. The conversation then turned on the young man, who was next to be

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provided for; and being found to be very well qualified for the post, he was chosen house-steward, and an apartment assigned him in our house, consisting of a bed-chamber, a parlour, and a little room for an office.

The joy of the tender parent was now compleat, and tears of gratitude rolled down his venerable cheeks. He lifted up his swimming eyes to heaven, and then casting them down upon us, blessed us with an ardour that spoke the fulness of a heart lost in devout thankfulness. 'O, little did I think,' cried he, 'of 'living to see such a day as this! My 'God, I thank thee! and, O bless my 'benefactors, as they have been the 'means of blessing me!' Here he took hold of Lucius's hand, and pressed it between his; then raising it up to his lips—'I thank you for my dear boy,' cried he; 'I joyfully commit him to 'your care. May it be always his 'study to deserve your goodness!'

Here the young man, finding his good father make a pause, stepped forwards, and then bowing—'Excuse me, Sir,' said he with a tone that seemed to arise from a mixture of timorousness, and a joy too big for utterance, 'if I want 'words to express my thankfulness for 'a favour greater, vastly greater, than 'all my hopes. But—a—my grati-'tude—my care and my fidelity—shall 'best thank you: but what return——' Here he made a long pause, and seemed quite lost; when the old man, with a little confusion in his look, cried—'You 'see, Sir, the effects of a want of gen-'teel company; my son has no illiberal 'education, nor does he want either 'sense or words to express himself, 'when among people of a lower class, 'with whom our circumstances have hi-'therto permitted him only to converse.' Lucius smiled, and clapping the youth on the shoulder with a free and familiar air, said, he would take care to remedy that fault; and this freedom of behaviour seemed to have an immediate effect, for, in an instant, the young man's confusion and disorder seemed to vanish; and being now pretty well assured, prompted by a little female curiosity, I desired him to give us the particulars of his amour with the farmer's daughter. He blushed, and, after a short pause, consented; and with more assurance, and less hesitation, though not without fear and trembling, gave us the following account.

'When I was about eighteen, as I 'was riding back from watering my 'master's horses, they took fright; the 'horse I rode on ran away with me, 'and hastily turning short through a 'gap in the hedge, threw me. I lay 'senseless for some time. When I came 'to myself, I hardly knew what had 'passed; I endeavoured to recollect 'myself, and looking about to see 'where I was, immediately cast my eyes 'on a very agreeable girl, neatly dres-'sed, who was sitting close by me. She 'lay half reclined, supporting herself 'with one hand on the grass, while the 'other, which was stretched over my 'breast, held a bottle of salts: but my 'eyes were hardly open when she arose, 'and, taking a step or two backwards, 'with her looks still fixed on me, told 'me, with an air of great humanity, 'that she was glad to see me alive, and 'asked me how I did. I thanked her, 'and complained of a violent pain in 'my head; she was sorry for it, she said, 'and wished me a good-night. I was 'then sitting up, and seeing her about 'to go, desired her to stay a little, and 'accept of my company; but she 'modestly refused me. She told me, she 'wished me well, and again bid me 'good-night; and, without turning her 'head, walked away as fast as she could. 'I still continued sitting in the same 'posture, when a few drops of blood 'trickling down my face, I lifted up 'my hand to wipe them away, and 'moving it towards the place where I 'felt the greatest pain, was surprized to 'find a handkerchief tied round my 'head, to stop the bleeding of a small 'wound; for I was so stunned with the 'fall, that I never perceived it before. 'I was pleased with the pretty girl's 'good-nature; and the next Sunday, 'waiting for her coming out of church, 'having before got the handkerchief 'washed, returned it with many thanks. 'She smiled, and told me I was very 'little obliged to her, since she did no 'more for me than what she would have 'done for any other person in the same 'condition; and very coldly, but civilly, 'saying—"Your servant," turned 'away to a young woman; and, taking 'hold of her arm, prevented my saying 'any more.'

'Poor

'Poor man!' said I, laughing, 'what a disappointment was this! I suppose you were a little mortified at it?'—'No, Madam,' replied he; 'indeed I was not. I had returned the handkerchief, and that was all the view I had in speaking to her. I looked upon her as a deserving girl; and was pleased, that though I had not discharged the obligation, I had paid a debt of honour.' Here, observing me smile—'Excuse me, Madam,' added he, 'for making use of a word, which, I am sure, does not become the mouth of such a one as me; but, even plowmen know what honour means, and, though they do not make use of the word, observe what is meant by it.' Lucius said he was in the right, and desired him to proceed, without minding my looks. On which he resumed—

'As I had, frequently, an opportunity of seeing her, this calm esteem made me sometimes single her out for conversation. I overtook her, by accident, in the fields, going a milking; I walked her pace, and sometimes, when she was returning back, carried her milk-pail: and, by this means, I insensibly learnt, from her mind, what I ought to feel in my own. The modest simplicity of her actions, the innocency of her looks, and the goodness of her heart, which was sure to be affected whenever an object of compassion was near, were those charms which I could not resist; and they would, indeed, have been too much for me, had her good sense been less remarkable. I was soon convinced that what she had done for me was purely the effect of her goodnature. For a long time she strove to avoid me, so that it was by slow degrees I learned her value. She began to have an esteem for me. I thought I deserved no other character than that of her friend; I told her so, and she was not displeased. Innocent in all, she had no idea of love, nor was the name mentioned. At sheep-shearing, at the wakes, and at harvest-home, she was constantly invited by my master's daughters, and I joined in the jovial merriment. Our esteem for each other encreased, till, at last, it ripened into love: and, when this was known to ourselves, we were frighted at the difficulties which lay before us; she told me her story, and persuaded me never to see her more.

'Her mother, a woman of sense, and very fond of books, took care of her infancy, and gave her too a taste for reading, and embellished her mind with many useful hints on the excellency of a virtuous character; but she soon died, and left her to the management of a weak and hard-hearted father, who marrying a woman much younger than himself, suffered her to be treated with the greatest inhumanity. But I will not trouble you with the severities she told me she met with from a wretch of no principles, a cruel step-mother, whose delight it was to give her uneasiness. Her aunt was enraged to see her sister's child treated so ill; she took her home, and it was at her house she lived when I used to have the pleasure of seeing her. An uncle of hers, who resided in London, has lately left her a hundred pounds, which is all her fortune; for though her father is reckoned to be worth between three and four hundred pounds, she has no expectation from him, as he has now a child by his second wife, who rules him as she pleases.

'I have not seen her this month, except at church; but with what reluctance I have submitted to this, no words can express. I thought her above me. I feared to bring upon her the reproaches of her relations, who, to be sure, would never consent to our happiness; to her marrying so poor a man; one so much beneath her. But your generosity, Sir, has removed this obstacle. I am in raptures when I think of it. How shall I express my gratitude! How describe a joy, which no words can paint! It is too much! You are too good, and I am too happy!'

Well, Madam, was I not in the right to represent this innocent youth as a person proper to make a shining figure in a pastoral? But you see he is above the rank of the Hobbinol of Gay, and would better suit the more dignified character of Pope's, or Phillips's gentle swains, who, with a greater dignity of sentiment, attune the warbling pipe to more lofty, more graceful, and harmonious numbers.

About an hour after this, the man returned

returned with Clod. Mr. Manly, without the leaſt deſign of alarming the farmer, had, inadvertently, ſent Robin for him; whom he no ſooner ſet his eyes on, than he recollected that he had ſeen him before; and being told that it was his maſter that went in to drink with him, after he had bought a load of hay, he was in a moſt terrible fright: he, therefore, came trembling, and entered the hall, where Mr. Manly had ſeated himſelf to receive him, with the air of a man going to receive ſentence of death; and having made an awkward bow as he came in, ſlunk into a corner. He was deſired to come forwards, which he did very ſlowly, looking downwards, and knitting his brows; and then ſtood before the awful little man, with a fear that made his lips quiver with a convulſive motion. When he was aſked how his wife did, and whether ſhe ſtill continued the ſame ſubmiſſive creature he had repreſented her; he looked very ſilly, and ſcratching his head, anſwered, 'Yes.'—'Then you 'are your own maſter,' ſaid he again, 'you are above being ruled by your 'wife; and, as you made her keep her 'diſtance, ſhe muſt not preſume to ad-'viſe or direct you in any thing that 'does not concern her.'—'Yes,' was anſwered again. 'Then,' rejoined Lucius, 'you take the whole blame, 'and all the guilt of this affair, upon 'yourſelf. I find I was miſtaken; I 'thought you might have been teazed 'into it by the importunity of a 'wicked woman; a crime that would 'have admitted of ſome alleviation; and 'then, though you would have more 'weakneſs, yet you would have leſs 'guilt.'

The man ſtared, and bit his lips; and, at laſt, ſtammering, cried—'But '—but—but ſhu did perſuade me to 'fell the trees, or I had no done it. 'Shu does what ſhu pleaſes wi' me, and 'I conno' help it. I thowt no harm.' '—Thought no harm!' cried Lucius; 'what, is there no harm in robbing your 'landlord?'—'Ay, ay,' cried the man, 'there is harm enough in that. But 'I mean, I thought no harm in telling 'you ſuch woundy lees about my wife, 'for I am aſheam'd, and wud no' ha' 'people think me ſuch an old foo'; 'yet I love her for aw that.'—'I find, 'however,' ſaid Lucius, with a magiſterial air, 'your word is not to be taken; 'but produce your counter-leaſe'. He now pulled it out of his pocket; and, with a look that ſhewed him ready to ſink with fear, gave it to Lucius, who juſt caſt his eye on the preamble, and returning it, ordered him to read it himſelf: but that was impoſſible; for, after he had read two or three ſhort words, and ſpelt a long one, Lucius obſerved, that his hand ſhook to ſuch a degree, that he would never be able to go through with it.

I was ſtanding all this while in a gallery that, leading to ſome chambers, croſſes the hall; and, looking very attentively over the iron rails, was liſtening, and, at the ſame time, contemplating on my Sancho, ſeated below me, in his two-armed chair; that formidable appearance, which ſtruck ſuch terror into the ſelf-condemned farmer. Juſt at this time, the venerable old man, whoſe name I might have told you before is Trueman, (but ſince I tell you ſo now, it is as well) entered with his ſon, and looking ſtedfaſtly at the farmer, ſtepped up to Lucius, and deſired to ſpeak a word with him in private. He aroſe from the ſeat of juſtice, and walking aſide, they whiſpered for half a minute, and then the old man, in great haſte, ran out of the hall. The judge ſeemed pleaſed; gave a nod, which ſignified a kind of aſſent; and, returning to his ſeat, took the leaſe, and giving it to young Trueman, deſired him to read it, which he had no ſooner done, than Lucius began—'Here you find, that 'you have not only forfeited your leaſe, 'but, beſides, are to pay me one hun-'dred pounds, over and above the value 'of the trees you have unlawfully cut 'down.'

At this inſtant, the gentle Mrs. Clod, with a child in her arms, burſt into the hall, and without the leaſt regard to any body preſent, directed her diſcourſe to her huſband. 'Ah ye foo,' ye block-'head, yo!' cried ſhe as loud as ſhe could bawl: 'ſee what you han browt 'us to. This is yo'r wife doings, ye 'oaf yo!' Old Clod looked now more aghaſt then ever, and with his eyes fixed on his wife, who ſtood behind him, deſired her to hold her tongue: but ſhe, lifting up her fiſt, replied, with great fury—'Hold my tongue, ye villain! 'hold my tongue! See this poor baby, 'ye unnatural brute! Yo ha' ruined 'us aw; ye have!' Clod obſerving her

her fift held up in a menacing poſture, and hearing theſe ungrateful ſounds, with his head ſtill turned behind him, fidled nearer and nearer to Lucius, as the leſs terrible object of the two; who, aſſuming a moſt haughty air, commanded her to be ſilent; at which, ſhe running forwards, and puſhing between Lucius and her huſband, (when, in an inſtant, thoſe eyes, which before ſhot lightening, now let fall a plenteous ſhower) blubbered very diſmally, and begged him to pity her, and that poor, pretty, dear, ſweet, helpleſs baby; and inſiſted, that though it was no great matter what became of ſuch a wicked man, ſuch a vile rogue, as her huſband, yet it would be the greateſt cruelty to ruin her, and ſo fine a child, ſo ſweet a wench, as that ſhe held in her arms. But, alas! the judge was deaf to all ſhe could ſay; he ordered a ſervant to turn her out of doors; but ſhe fell on her knees, and, with great earneſtneſs, endeavoured to perſuade him to ſuffer her to ſtay. This favour, at laſt, was granted, only upon condition of ſilence; which was no ſooner done, than Clod, ſeeming to revive and recover ſpirits, from his indignation, cried out—'I could no' ha' thowt 'it: ſhu wud ha' me into jail: well, 'I'll ſee who ſhall ſuffer; I ha' another 'dowter, and her mother wud na' ha' 'ſerved me ſo.'

Lucius now repreſented the heinouſneſs of the crime, and inſiſted upon the penalty: and ordering young Trueman to fill up a bond which he had before ſent for, the farmer ſigned it with leſs reluctance than I could have imagined, only repeating a curſe or two on his wife, loud enough for her to hear, and crying—'I'll be her foo' no 'longer; I ha' another dowter.'

The filling up of the bond took up ſome time, for our young ſteward was not yet very expert at his buſineſs, and his father was not there to aſſiſt him: but the ceremony of ſigning and ſealing was hardly over, when the good old man entered, introducing an elderly woman, and a very pretty young woman of about ſeventeen, whom he led to Lucius. Our judge aroſe, and bowed; and, at the ſame inſtant, farmer Clod cried out—'My 'poor dowter!' and young Trueman dropped an ink ſtandiſh, which he was carrying into his office. Clod's wife gave them all a curſe, and grumbling, left the place, while he ſeized one of the girl's hands, and throwing his other arm about her neck, gave her a hearty ſmack, crying—'I am o'moſt ruined; 'but no matter, I deſerve it. Wull 'yo' forgi' me, wench? Yo are my 'dowter, and yo ſhall be my dowter, in 'ſpite of the devil.' Young Trueman had, during this ſpeech, ſeized her other hand, which Clod had neither power nor reſolution to prevent, and which, with an air of native innocence, ſhe chearfully reſigned to her lover. Her eyes were in an inſtant turned from her father, and fixed with great ſoftneſs on the young man, who gazed on her with a look of mingled tenderneſs and rapture.

This, Madam, was a ſcene which at firſt I could not comprehend, and ſo ſtrange a turn filled me at once with curioſity, and held me in an agreeable ſuſpence: but it was a curioſity too violent to ſuffer me to continue at a diſtance an unintereſted ſpectator. I therefore ran down ſtairs, when old Trueman, with the elderly woman, having joined themſelves to Lucius, to whom they were talking, and accidentally fronting the other three, I could not help ſaying with a laugh—'Well, if after all you are diſ-'poſed for a country dance, I hope I 'may be allowed to make one.' They all ſmiled; and after the uſual ceremony of a few bows and curtſies, and your humble ſervant, and the like, Lucius addreſſed himſelf again to Clod—

'You have now performed,' ſaid he, 'the conditions I demanded; nor ſhall 'I make any reflections on what is 'paſſed, ſince this would expoſe you be-'fore your relations. My thoughts 'are now taken up with the general hap-'pineſs of your whole family. If I 'inſiſted ſo ſtrenuouſly on your paying 'the fine, it was only with a view to 'ſecure ſome part of the fortune of a 'daughter whom you have neglected; 'and by giving the bond to this young 'man, whom you muſt now look upon 'as your ſon, I return it again into the 'ſame family; ſince, as my ſteward, he 'does not need this to make him an ad-'vantageous match for your daughter.' Here Clod, without ſtirring a ſtep, ſtretched out his neck, to ſtare at Trueman; and ſeeming more and more to recover himſelf, drew his daughter back a little, crying—'A proper mon; hay, 'wench. Gi' me yo'r hond;' which Trueman doing, he gave it a hearty

ſhake, ſaying—'God bleſs yo' together. 'I wiſh it with aw my heart. Shu is a 'good wench; I'll ſay that for her.' And then turning to Lucius, bowed ſo low, and gave ſuch a ſcrape, that he had like to have fallen upon his face. The young woman bluſhed, and curtſied; and Lucius having by this time found the bond, which he pulled out of his pocket, preſented it to Trueman, ſaying—'Here, take this, and I wiſh you 'all imaginable happineſs;' while he received it with a look of gratitude and joy. Lucius reſumed—'I am ſenſible 'that what you told me was in con-'fidence: I therefore remit of the rigour 'of my firſt demand. I return you 'your counter-leaſe, and ſhall ſell the 'trees myſelf; I only deſire you to ſet 'the ſame number of plants in their 'room.'—'Ay, marry wull I,' cried he, as he received it, 'and as many 'more to boot; and rot me if ever ſhu 'make me ſuch a rogue again.' Now nothing was heard but joy and congratulations. The young woman's aunt, (for that was the perſon that came in with her) as ſhe loved her niece, was very liberal of her thanks and acknowledgments; ſhe kiſſed the young couple, and inſiſted on providing the wedding dinner, as ſoon as they could be aſked in due form at church: for, as ſhe was no friend to licences, ſhe was reſolved that the marriage ſhould not be performed till after this ceremony was compleated, which ſhe thought neceſſary to render it valid. The happy couple were the leaſt tumultuous in their joy, for that was principally expreſſed on both ſides by the eloquent language of the countenance, which ſufficiently told us all they could have uttered; and, perhaps, they choſe that we ſhould rather ſee than hear the expreſſions of their mutual tenderneſs: but it is more probable that, wholly taken up with the preſence of each other, they never thought of us at all, and while they were ſilent, did not ſuſpect that any in the company could underſtand a language which they doubtleſs imagined peculiar to themſelves. But it was not ſo with old Clod, who knew no other way of expreſſing his joy than by capering about the hall, bleſſing the ſquire and his good lady, kiſſing his daughter, and hugging young Trueman. In ſhort, we adjourned into a parlour; when wine, ale, and tea, were called for, which every one partook of as they pleaſed. Nor was the cold ſir-loin forgot, which by ancient cuſtom is a joint devoted to hoſpitality; for this was placed on a ſideboard, near the farmer, whoſe uneaſineſs having coſt him a dinner, he wiſely, upon the return of his ſpirits and his ſtomach, did not ſuffer it to ſtand neglected. At laſt, they all took their leave, but not till our young ſteward had ſhewn his intended bride her future apartment, which Lucius, in the preſence of the aunt, promiſed ſhould be immediately furniſhed for their reception.

You ſee, Madam, that innocence and peace do not always bleſs the cottage: vice ſometimes finds an entrance under the loweſt roof; and care and ſorrow can hover over the brow of humble virtue. With theſe ſage remarks, which inform you of nothing but what you knew before, I conclude my letter, having no more to add, but that I am, and ſhall ever be, your ladyſhip's moſt affectionate friend,

FELICIA MANLY.

P. S. Upon recollection, I think I ought not to have informed you that the wicked woman, who makes no inconſiderable character in the above letter, is a ſtep-mother: but, ſurely, you will not do me the injury to ſuſpect that, by inſerting it, I would inſinuate a reflection upon others, who, with the name, have quite different diſpoſitions. A certain lady, whom you dearly love, and to whom your couſin owes ten thouſand obligations, is a glorious exception; and I know ſome other ladies, beſides Miſs Biddy, who, from a mother-in-law, have received all the tender indulgences, and all the obligations they could reaſonably expect from a real parent. If you ſhew your aunt this letter, as I find you have done ſome others, don't let her overlook this poſtſcript.

LETTER XXXV.

DEAR MADAM,

YOU ſee what a variety of impertinences your deſire of frequently hearing from me has forced me to commit; but what elſe can be expected from rural ſcenes, which, though the haunt of lovers, are the moſt unfruitful of intrigues? for where almoſt every one acts from nature, nothing of the marvellous

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can be expected. Yet I shall now open a scene of wonders, that will give you the greatest astonishment.

One day last week, to our no small surprize, we received a pressing invitation to dine with Mr. Stevens, the sprightly old gentleman, whose character * you were so well pleased with, and whom we had not seen since the disgrace of his superlatively pious sister Prudilla†. Our desire of renewing the acquaintance of so agreeable a companion, made us readily comply with his request. Lucius therefore ordered the coach to be immediately got ready, and we set out soon after.

Upon our arrival, we were received by the gentleman himself, with his usual affability and freedom; but with less of that humorous gaiety in his look which indicates the friend and chearful companion. After paying us some handsome, though late, compliments on our nuptials, he informed us, that his sister, who he confessed had injured us in his esteem, being now dangerously ill of a consumption, desired to see us, that she might unburthen her mind as much as possible, by confessing her guilt, and endeavouring to obtain our pardon; and that, as she was now awake, if we pleased, he would introduce us himself. We immediately consented, and followed him to her chamber. We found her seated in an easy chair, one arm hanging negligently down by the side, which, by it's thinness, seemed immoderately long. She was worn to a skeleton; her head leaning back in a languid posture, discovered a thin, pale, and dejected countenance, which, the moment she raised it, expressed all the signs of inward confusion, horror, and guilt. She fixed her eyes on us, sighed, and waving her hand, desired us, with a weak voice, to sit down by her, which we immediately did; when Mr. Stevens left us, and, before he shut the door, assured his sister, that he would take care that nobody should come to interrupt us.

What an object was here! How wretchedly depraved must that mind be, that could triumph before an enemy so reduced, so humble, and so worthy of pity! Lucius could not: his concern was extremely visible; and, though I never saw him in a more sprightly humour than he was in the whole morning, it was now instantly vanished; and his countenance had an air of solemn gravity and compassion. With a tone of great humanity, he asked how she did. She thanking him, answered—'I am extremely ill. O, Sir, I am going—I 'am going to that Being, who will not 'be imposed upon by false appearances. 'Oh! the horrors of a guilty mind! O 'conscience! conscience! I have plotted your ruin—I have endeavoured to 'destroy your peace—your fortune—'your happiness here—your soul hereafter!' Then, wiping her eyes—'Oh! 'I ask your pardon—Can you forgive 'me? Can you? Will you?' This was spoke with such a beseeching look, and uttered with so much earnestness, that it would have been barbarous to have kept her any longer in suspense. Lucius, therefore, immediately replied, in that tender tone which nature gives to the voice when the heart is deeply affected with compassion—'Yes, Madam, I heartily forgive you. But 'why this eagerness? Do you think me 'incapable of pity?'—'No, Sir,' added she, 'I know you are not: but, alas! 'you know not what you say! You 'don't know how much I have been 'your enemy. But don't—don't withdraw your forgiveness,' continued she, looking stedfastly in his face; and then casting her eyes on the ground, added—'It was I that caused your father to be 'arrested. It was I—I that persuaded 'his creditors to throw him in a jail.'—'How!' cried Lucius, reddening; and then, after a few moments reflection, resumed with a sigh—'Well, this is 'not a time for reproaches.'—'Reproaches!' cried she; 'I deserve them 'all—I know I deserve them all, and 'am prepared to receive them. O 'Madam! I loved Lucius with a criminal passion, and, under a veil of 'sanctity, thought to conceal myself 'from the eyes of the world; but I 'could not do it from the all-piercing 'eye of Heaven. But my plots were 'discovered, and you were a witness of 'the shameful, but just, treatment I met 'with at your aunt's, when all my contrivances to break the match betwixt 'you and this gentleman were laid 'open. Your aunt's reproaches sharpened the sting of my guilty conscience; 'your and your cousin's triumph over

* See Letter IV. Letter VIII. † Letter XIX.

'me made my mind boil with rage and 'shame, and disappointed love. I re-'turned home—I contrived ways of re-'venge, and sought still to destroy your 'peace. At last, I thought of Mr. 'Manly. I knew some of his creditors; 'I flew to them, and, under a pretence 'of visiting their wives, indulged the 'malice of this wicked heart. This, 'at first, was all my view: but soon, 'Madam, I recollected that your hus-'band had a tender and generous mind: 'I hoped his duty, and his affection to 'his father, would be too strong for his 'passion for you—I hoped he would 'relieve him, and I was not deceived. 'I prepared to let your father know 'that he was an impostor, that he had 'greatly lessened his fortune; and, by 'this means, thought myself again in-'fallibly certain of breaking the match: 'but soon I learned that these hopes 'were vain; Lucius had himself in-'formed him of the whole affair—He 'was forgiven, and I plunged in fresh 'despair. O Lucius! I durst not now see 'your father. Oh! a guilty conscience! 'a guilty conscience! Crime followed 'crime, till I sinned beyond all hopes 'of mercy.'—'It is an ingenuous con-'fession, however,' cried Lucius, 'and 'I heartily forgive you. May God for-'give you too! I'll promise for my 'father.'—'I thank you,' said she, and stopped; and then continuing silent for some time, she at last fixed her eyes on Lucius, and resumed—'I have another 'affair, but I cannot mention it to you, 'I cannot speak of it—but, as it is 'more necessary to be discovered than 'any thing I have yet said, I have wrote 'it down. Here, look at this paper—'read my shame, and then let me speak 'to you alone. You will know it time 'enough, Madam. I can scarcely think 'of it before you, and must therefore 'beg of you to retire.'

You won't wonder, Madam, that I was very much surprized at this propo-sal, which appeared the more extraor-dinary, by her manner of introducing it. What could I think? It had an odd ap-pearance. Lucius seemed thoroughly sensible of this, and therefore endea-voured to detain me. 'This is very 'strange!' cried he: 'What concern can 'I have in any secret affair of yours, 'which my Felicia may not be acquaint-'ed with? Or what can that be, which 'is fit only for me, and not for her to 'know?'—'Dear Madam—dear Sir, 'oblige me,' cried she, with an earnest-ness that pleaded more than her words: 'surely this request cannot be hard for 'you to grant!' Lucius made no answer, but, receiving the paper, went to the window to read it. As she sat with her back to the light, he might do it as safely here as in another room, without raising her blushes by the disorder of his looks; and, perhaps, her chair was set in this manner on purpose. Mean while I arose, and walking out of the room, pulled the door after me; which I had hardly done, when I heard Lucius stamp, and cry out—'I a child by you, Ma-'dam! 'Tis false. 'Tis a notorious lye.' And then, running to the door, desired me to come in, with a look that shewed him in a most violent passion. 'It seems,' added he, 'that this important affair, so 'improper for you to hear, is what you 'have an immediate concern in; she has 'the impudence to say here—but read 'it yourself. What a vile, scandalous 'lye! I a child by her!'

As I was but just on the outside of the door when he called me, I immediately returned; and, being much less disturbed than he, had the precaution to shut it, as I entered the room. I must confess that I was in a very queer situation of mind: I was far from being easy. But it is impossible for me to give you any idea of Lucius's behaviour: he stamped, he stared, his colour changed from a deep scarlet to a livid paleness; and then looking towards the chair, with rage and contempt strongly painted in his counte-nance—'Is this your repentance?' cried he, 'wicked and abandoned wretch! 'In such a condition, too!—Your af-'fectation of modesty!—My wife must 'not know it—You can't speak of it 'before her!'—'Why so warm, my 'dear?' replied I, with a smile: 'if 'there is nothing in it, it can only serve 'to encrease our detestation of a wretch 'that, so near her death, could be guilty 'of so vile a slander.'—'*If!*' cried he, with a snappish hastiness: 'It is an ab-'solute lye—she is the last woman that 'I would be guilty of such an affair 'with—such an antidote to desire!—'I should be as much ashamed of my 'taste as of the crime.'

We were now alarmed by an affair of a very different kind; for Prudilla, who had heard every word, unable to support the shock of being treated in so severe a manner,

manner, at this instant fainted away, and fell out of her chair; and we beheld a pale and almost lifeless being lie stretched out on the hearth, in a manner that called for immediate relief. To what strange revolutions is the human mind subject! Not all our indignation, not all the fury of passion, could prevent our running immediately to her assistance, and giving her that succour that her case required. Lucius raised her head from under the grate, where she was in danger of being burnt, and, with my assistance, lifted her into her chair, and there held her, while I ran to call her brother. He came, but it was near half an hour before we brought her to herself. At last, she opened her eyes, and her brother forced her to drink a glass of wine and hartshorn; but she no sooner recovered her spirits, than she burst into tears; nor could she utter any thing but sighs for a considerable time, endeavouring all the while to conceal her blushes by covering her face. At last, she desired her brother to leave us; and, when he was gone, not a word was spoke for near two minutes more: for she was so weak, that Lucius, dreading some ill consequence might again attend his not being able to master his temper, resolved to let her begin first, and to wait with patience till he could hear what she had to say in vindication of this *notorious lye*, as he called it. This he let me know as soon as Mr. Stevens left the room, by writing his resolution on a piece of paper, which he easily did, as there was a pen and ink upon the table, which stood close at his elbow. I began to be tired of this suspense, when she began, with a deep sigh—'Now you know my 'shame; but I did not think I should 'be treated in this manner. O, you are 'very cruel, you might have read the 'paper out.'—'Is it not false?' cried Lucius; 'had you ever a child by me?' —'Pray let me go on,' said she; 'you 'ought, indeed, to have read the paper 'out, before you fell into such a pas-'sion.'—'Did not I read one lye at 'the beginning?' interrupted he again; 'to what purpose should I read on to 'find more?'—'Hear me, hear me,' rejoined she, 'I take the shame and guilt 'upon myself, why should you not then 'hear me? You lay at our house 'about two years ago; twice you lay 'here; if you remember, it rained, and 'you could not go home. Oh, how 'shall I tell the rest! You was waked 'by a woman in your bed.' Lucius blushed, and looked at me, and immediately replied—'I acknowledge it, 'Madam; but proceed. 'I left you 'while you were asleep; I was gone 'before it was light; and the first time 'you lay here, you found our cham-'bermaid's handkerchief lying by the 'side of the bed, which, the next morn-'ing, she owned. The odiousness of 'my crime made me glad to conceal it; 'I blushed at my own wickedness, 'and, to preserve my character, left the 'handkerchief.'

'I own it all, Madam,' cried Lucius, 'and I sincerely beg your pardon. 'Indeed, I ought not to have been so 'warm; but I beg you would forgive a 'language which I acknowledge did 'not become me. My suspicion fell 'where you intended it should; but 'how barbarous, how ungenerous, was 'it in you, to sully the character of an 'innocent creature, by laying your 'guilt to her charge!'—'If that be so 'great a fault,' returned she, 'I have 'much to answer for. Oh, I am a guil-'ty creature! but the shame I then felt 'for my faults, though it prompted me 'to do all I could to hide them, though 'it made me blush in private, and al-'most hate myself, was nothing to the 'horror I now feel.'—'Pray, Ma-'dam,' said I, 'proceed with your sto-'ry; I long to hear what is become of 'the child.'—'Lucius, Madam, may 'remember,' continued she, 'that I 'went to London, about four months 'after the last time he lay at our house; 'there, instead of visiting my friends, I 'lived very retired, and, pretending 'that my husband was gone abroad, 'was well respected, and, at last, 'brought to bed of a fine girl. After 'my return home, I sent for it into the 'country, and it is now at Clifton, 'where it passes for the child of a poor 'woman, whom I had taken a fancy 'to, and resolved to keep out of cha-'rity. In that paper is a direction 'where to find it; and in that paper too, 'you will see that I have left this living 'witness of my shame seven thousand 'pounds, which is all my fortune; and 'if she dies, it is to be equally divided 'between you and my brother: for 'you are the person I love dearest, and 'have most injured. But my brother 'will shew you my will; he has consented

'to

'to every thing; and, therefore, I have 'chosen him and you for my executors. 'But I am quite spent—I hope I shall 'see you after dinner.' This we promised, and retired.

I don't know, Madam, whether I can vindicate to myself my thus laying open a secret affair, that reflects so much upon the character of my dear Lucius. How triumphantly you cry out—'O the 'man of immaculate virtue, the modest, 'the sober, the religious Lucius! in 'bed with a superannuated old maid! 'Mighty pretty! Who could have 'thought it?' But however you exclaim, I know you will be pleased to find him a little lower in your esteem; or else what is become of all your pretty hints—that he was too good to be married—That you should not like a husband so extremely perfect—and that you thought it necessary that a man, who was to be your companion for life, should have some faults, that he might be better able to excuse yours. Think of this, and cease your exclamations. As to Prudilla's conduct, it is vastly more inexcusable: but I consider her as an humble penitent, and, therefore, shall not expatiate on her crimes. I have been melted by her tears; I have heartily forgiven her, and this has made me omit several speeches which had I inserted, though they might have kept up the enthusiastick part of her character, would have weakened your pity, by making her appear ridiculous.

I have the honour to be, Madam, your ladyship's most sincere, and most affectionate friend,

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XXXVI.

DEAR MADAM,

WE had staid so long with Prudilla, that, when we went down, we found the dinner almost spoiled; for Mr. Stevens, imagining that this might be the last time of our seeing her alive, was not willing to interrupt us, being very sensible that we had affairs upon our hands of much greater moment.

The cloth was no sooner taken away, than Mr. Stevens, having lighted his pipe, addressed himself to Lucius, and told him, that his sister had desired him to shew him the will before it was sealed up. 'You know, already, I suppose,' said he, 'that you and I are appointed 'her executors, and I don't doubt but 'she has told you in what manner she 'has disposed of her fortune. Tell me 'now, honestly, don't you think my 'sister out of her senses? Self-interest, 'perhaps, may bias me, but you are 'an unprejudiced person: therefore, let 'me know what you think of her leaving seven thousand pounds to a 'stranger. Had she left it to a female 'friend, to you, or any other man of 'merit, I should not have cared, I 'would not have troubled myself at it's 'going out of the family; but to leave 'it to a little brat, that can but just go 'alone—Pox! it's enough to make one 'mad.' Here he began to puff, as if he had a mind to smother us; and, in an instant, we were surrounded with a cloud of smoke. Lucius seemed extremely confounded; when, to give him time to think of a proper answer, I replied—'She 'has taken a fancy to the child, I suppose; perhaps it may belong to some-'body very dear to her.'—'A fancy, 'Madam!' cried he; 'it is a very odd 'fancy, that she, who never in her life 'could endure children, should, at these 'years, take such a fancy to one, as to 'leave it all she is worth. I very 'bluntly told her so; and, as I refused 'to have any thing to do in this affair, 'without better reasons than she was 'pleased to yield me, she referred me to 'you, to give me satisfaction.'—'That 'I can easily do,' said Lucius; 'you 'are her brother, and I have a right to 'know the whole affair, which I, though 'most concerned, was ignorant of till 'this morning: Suppose the child 'should be her own?'—'Why, aye,' cried the old man, after a short silence; and then deliberately poured out a mighty cloud, which he had been collecting from the time Lucius began to speak—'there is something in that, in-'deed: but how could she, who is so 'cursed modest, that she could not men-'tion it to her own brother, tell it you?' —'Who should she tell it to, but to 'the child's father?' said I. 'The child's 'father!' he rejoined, holding his pipe in his hand, and staring with a look of the utmost astonishment; 'what, Lucius 'the child's father! he! the modest Lu-'cius! my young philosopher! he make 'a whore of my sister! Do you know, 'young man,' added he, 'what you 'deserve

'deserve for doing our family this ho-
'nour? Suppose I should order my fel-
'lows to cool your courage in the
'horse-pond, should not I serve you
'right? Hay, tell me that, you young
'dog? Could you find nobody, but
'my sister, to make a whore of? A
'woman old enough to be your mother,
'ye little whelp! So you must come
'here preaching your damned nonsense,
'about virtue and honour, and the
'devil knows what; and I, like an old
'fool, must sit listening and hugging
'you to my bosom, while you, forsooth,
'was only waiting for an opportunity
'to debauch my sister!' Here he started up, crying, 'The horse-pond! Ay, and
'it shall be the horse-pond, if it cost me
'a thousand pounds! By the Lord
'Harry, I'll make a soused mackarel
'of him!'

Lucius, who at first sat with a kind of pusillanimous shame, as, perhaps, imagining, that as Mr. Stevens thought him the aggressor, he had an undoubted right to complain, now started from his chair, and stepping between him and the door, locked it, and put the key in his pocket; then turning hastily round, and clapping his hand to his sword, which he drew half out of the scabbard, he cried—'Hold, Sir, I shall take upon
'me to secure the door; you must not
'go out without my leave: how far I
'have injured either you or your sister,
'she may, if she pleases, inform you;
'for I think it beneath me to palliate
'any fault of mine, by laying it upon
'her.' This was spoke in a resolute tone; but the old man, not seeming to mind what he said, having his whole thoughts taken up with his posture, cried out—'There is a young philoso-
'pher now! a pretty fellow to make me
'a prisoner in my own house;' and then casting his eyes on the glittering steel, 'Well done, Don John! There is a dog
'for you now! He has lain with the
'sister, and now would murder the bro-
'ther! A fine philosopher!—But I
'won't draw—I'll ha' none of your
'cold iron in my guts—I'd see both
'you and sister at old Nick first!' Then wheeling upon his heel, he added, 'You
'shall as soon roast as spit me.'

The moment Lucius ran to the door, I flew to the window, and throwing open the sash, called Robin and John: but hearing the old man declare his aversion to cold iron, I drew in my hand, and was going to shut the window, when he came to me, and putting out his head, first threw away his pipe, and then called out Sam and Harry: but we both called in vain; for, as we found afterwards, they were all drinking together in the cellar, with the butler. I was, all this while, fretting, trembling, and blaming myself, as the cause of all this disturbance, by the imprudent manner in which I had discovered the affair; and was the more uneasy, as I thought Lucius had sufficient reason to be offended: and this reflection was so painful, that, stupid with vexation, for some time I had not the power of contriving any probable means of setting all right again. At last, I recollected the paper which Prudilla had given to Lucius, and he to me; and, as the old man was still leaning on my shoulder, and calling for his servants, I desired him to be pacified, and told him that, on condition he would sit down and be easy, I would convince him that Mr. Manly was much less to blame than he imagined. Mr. Stevens, finding that it was to no purpose to expect any assistance from his servants, readily complied; and, seating himself in the window, while Lucius took a chair next the door, I gave him the paper, saying—'Here, Sir, is a short ac-
'count of the whole affair, written by
'her own hand.' He took it, and mumbling to himself, uttered now and then an articulate sound, making his remarks to himself, as he went on—"*Blushes!—Die with shame!*" And then raising his voice—"*Be surprized to*
"*hear that you have had a child by me!*"
'Be surprized to hear it!' cried he.
'What the deuce! did he get her with
'child in his sleep! "*Remember—*
"*asleep!*" 'Aye, it must be so,' Here he burst out a laughing, crying—'Well, this is very extraordinary!
'Get a child in his sleep! No, that
'can't be it neither; for she says, "*he*
"*remembered it.*" 'Well, let's see.—
'O, I have it, "*A woman came to bed*
"*to him in his sleep.*" 'Aye, that
'may be; but she did not get him with
'child, I hope. "*Early in the morn-*
"*ing—dark.*" 'The deuce! What a
'rare modest sister I have got! Well,
'it can't be helped. Why, now I
'ought, like an ass, to ask his pardon.
'Faith, I should not have wondered
'if

'if he had ſwore a rape againſt her. "*The handkerchief?*" O, the ſly devil!—and ſo he was, to ſuſpect Jenny Law, as pretty a girl as any in the pariſh.'

Here, tearing the paper, he went to Lucius, crying at every ſtep, 'I beg your pardon, I beg your pardon, with all my heart. Odſo, what a racket have I been making in vindication of the honour of my ſiſter, when her honour is not worth a button!'

They now ſhook hands, and in a few minutes were as good friends as if nothing had happened. Prudilla had dined in her chamber, and afterwards laid down for about an hour; and then ſent to inform us, that ſhe ſhould be glad of our company. She now looked much better than when we entered the room before; notwithſtanding her having, ſince that time, ſuffered a very great expence of ſpirits. This might be occaſioned by her having now no more painful ſecrets to diſcloſe. Her countenance was tolerably ſerene; and, though ſhe could not look upon us without confuſion, it was a confuſion unmixed with that ghaſtly horror which before gave an additional wanneſs to her diſcoloured cheeks and lips. She was riſing as we entered the room; and, as ſhe took the ſame ſeat, we took ours. After enquiring how ſhe did, and particularly, whether ſhe had received any hurt from her fall from the chair, which ſhe aſſured us ſhe had not, ſhe began—

'I have now diſcovered my ſhame to you both; and, whatever you think of me, I deſire you would not, when I am gone, expoſe me among my friends. I have now little elſe to do, but to prepare for that other world to which I am haſtening. Death is a dreadful ſtroke, but I muſt go through it. It is guilt, it is guilt that makes it terrible. I am very loth to die. It will be your duty, Sir, to take care of this child. I am very ſenſible, that the dear infant has no right to any part of the fortune you obtained by your marriage with this lady, and therefore I give her mine. To ſpeak my mind freely, it is with great uneaſineſs that I ſupport the thought of leaving her to ſuch an atheiſt as you. My religious principles are very different from yours; or, rather, I queſtion whether you have any religion at all. However, you are a moral man; and if mere morality would ſave you, you bid fairer than moſt others for happineſs. The morality of the beſt is imperfect; and, therefore, not fit to juſtify us in the ſight of God.—But, alas! why do I talk of morality! I that build all my hopes on your doing juſtice to my child, in giving her, if not religious, at leaſt virtuous principles, drawn from this morality! I, who have ſo heinouſly ſinned, that I hardly durſt hope for mercy! I, that have abuſed all the good ſenſe that God has given me, and behaved like one that never taſted of the ſweetneſs of his grace! Oh, I feel the corruptneſs of my own heart! I was ſurely born in ſin, and in iniquity did my mother conceive me. I am ſenſible that my own righteouſneſs is but as filthy rags.'

It was now impoſſible for me, Madam, to forbear ſmiling. I could not help giving my aſſent to theſe laſt words, and ſaying to myſelf, that I believed ſo too. Lucius kept his countenance pretty well: he heard himſelf loaded with abundance of religious abuſe, without the leaſt diſcompoſure in his look: he ſhook his head, liſtened ſtill with pity in his eyes, and never once attempted to interrupt her. After a good deal more to the ſame purpoſe, ſhe let us know that ſhe had had a pious education, and a very early experimental ſenſe of religion. That, as ſhe was converted betimes, as ſhe thought then, though now ſhe doubted it, ſhe had always a great abhorrence of vice; but grew proud of her religious attainments, and this, added to a temper naturally peeviſh, made her cenſorious. At laſt ſhe loved Lucius; ſhe ſtruggled againſt her weakneſs; ſhe repreſented to herſelf the difference of their age, and the little probability that he would marry a woman twenty years older than himſelf: however, ſhe ſtrove to allure him by her behaviour; but it was all in vain: ſhe then changed her conduct; her paſſion became criminal; and, after a ſtruggle between that and her conſcience, flattered herſelf, that, as ſhe had ſuch proof of her being one of the elect, it was impoſſible ſhe ſhould ever be a caſt-away; and, confiding in this, ſhe reſolved to give way to her paſſion: ſhe then drank in iniquity like water; and going on from one crime to another, ſinned beyond all hopes of mercy. Poor Lucius was the cauſe of all: had ſhe never

never known him, she might have still been virtuous: but love made her commit what her conscience condemned. She could not bear her own reflections; she, therefore, endeavoured to conceal her actions from the light, from herself, from him, from the world.

This, Madam, is the substance of a very long discourse, of which I was heartily weary; nor should I trouble you with it, if it did not seem necessary to give you a portrait of her mind, and to let you see how far even religion, when raised upon false principles, had an influence in corrupting her heart. It was a gloomy system, collected from abstruse passages in Scripture, in opposition to the plainest; big with absurdity, contradiction, and blasphemy; contrary to every sentiment we can form of the Deity, as a wise and good being, and to the plainest dictates of unprejudiced reason.

Lucius did not chuse to make any answer to this fine harangue, which she did not conclude without giving him some exhortations to repentance: and, indeed, she had drawn it out to such a length, and her spirits were so exhausted, that she was obliged, immediately after, to lie down: we therefore took our leave, promising to see her again in two or three days time. We drank tea with Mr. Stevens, who behaved in the most friendly manner. The will was read, and he had now no objection to being his sister's executor.

We had scarcely drove from the door, when I observed that Lucius appeared extremely thoughtful. We were now free from company, and perhaps he might dread lest I should take hold of this first opportunity to make him some reproaches: but I was resolved to disappoint him. He watched my looks; he eyed me very attentively from time to time, and seemed desirous of divining my thoughts, while, with a modest diffidence in his countenance, he seemed to wait till I began the disagreeable subject. I believe we had been full five minutes in the coach without speaking a word to each other: at last, I began with asking him, what were his thoughts of Prudilla? 'I hardly know,' said he, 'what to think of her; she has confessed 'herself guilty of very black crimes. 'Could I have consented to conceal my 'father's misfortunes, I had been justly 'punished. I must have been ruined. 'What would your father have thought 'of me?'—'It is very true,' said I, 'it 'was an infernal scheme; the very idea 'of it makes me tremble. It was happy for me, that your generous sentiments, which would not suffer you to 'conceal it, broke all her measures. 'But the child——' added I, smiling; 'why, I am made a mother at a time 'when I least thought of it. But did 'your suspicions fall where she intended 'they should?'—'Yes, my dear,' said he, giving me a most affectionate look, that seemed to thank me for treating him so gently; 'I returned the handkerchief, which the young woman 'received, indeed, without a blush: 'this I perfectly remember. I had never taken notice of her before; and methought she had, with a very agreeable person, an innocence and modesty 'in her behaviour which I could not 'tell how to reconcile with the character 'of a lascivious wanton. I reflected on 'what I had done; and reflection 'brought a number of ideas to my 'mind, that were by no means pleasing. 'However, I had the honest satisfaction 'of thinking that I was not her corrupter; and this thought blunted the 'sharpness of self-reproach. I looked 'upon her ruin as almost irreparable; and 'painted to myself, in the strongest colours, the unhappy situation of a girl 'abandoned to the indulgence of disgraceful appetites, lost to all sense of 'real virtue and honour, and in the direct road to infamy and misery. I 'pitied her, and resolved to endeavour, 'at least, to reclaim her. I found 'her one day alone; and, seizing the 'opportunity, I began a lecture on incontinency.'—'O hideous!' interrupted I; 'a pretty gentleman to preach 'to a girl on that subject!—the supposed partner in her guilt too! Why, I 'wonder how you could have the confidence to open your mouth about it. 'The most improper person!'—'No, 'my dear,' returned Lucius, with a smile, 'I must differ from you: for, 'supposing her the person, I can't help, 'even now, thinking myself the most 'proper man in the world. However, 'it was with much difficulty that I 'brought myself to form the resolution, 'and with more still that I put it in 'practice. I thought it my duty in 'a peculiar manner, and encouraged 'myself with the pleasing prospect of

'saving a very agreeable girl from ruin. 'But, when I had this opportunity, I 'knew not how to begin. I was 'ashamed of appearing more virtuous 'than her, and reproaching her for 'an action, which she, I imagined, 'thought I ought rather to thank her 'for. These last reflections held me 'for some time silent; but, at last, I 'boldly began, with observing that a 'girl so agreeable in her person, and, 'to outward appearance, so modest and 'prudent, seemed formed by nature for 'happiness: and that it was a pity, 'that, with so many perfections, she 'should destroy all her hopes of enjoy-'ing the pleasures of an innocent love, 'all her prospects of a happy marriage; 'lose the eternal rewards of heaven, 'and inconsiderately plunge herself in 'ruin and infamy. She interrupted me, 'by telling me, she was surprized to 'hear me talk in this manner, and 'wondered what I would be at. I then 'began to tell her that I was a partner 'in her guilt; and that, though I had 'not the resolution to withstand the 'temptation, yet my conscience re-'proached me for what I had done, and 'I repented of my folly. "Let me per-"suade you," said I. She stared—she 'believed I was mad—she flew out of 'the room, and I—looked like a fool.

'I believe so,' replied I, bursting into a laugh. 'Poor girl! I pity her. I only 'wish Prudilla had overheard you. But, 'I hope the natural innocence of her be-'haviour cured this groundless suspi-'cion.'—'In a great measure it did,' re-turned he; 'notwithstanding it was rea-'sonable to suppose that a girl, who took 'such precaution as to come and go away 'in the dark, and who, all the time she 'was with me, never spoke louder than 'a whisper, would strenuously deny a 'fact which she took such pains to 'conceal: I was not, therefore, per-'fectly satisfied.—But I can't help 'thinking, now I know her innocent, 'in how ridiculous a light I must then 'appear to her. Two or three months 'after, I lay there again; I took the 'precaution to lock my door, but I had 'not been an hour in bed, when I met 'with the same temptation, which, in 'spite of all my previous resolutions, 'again proved too strong for me. Thus, 'perfectly convinced of my own weak-'ness, I resolved never to lie another 'night in the same house. But, when-'ever I went there, I took particular 'notice of the young woman's com-'plexion, as well as of her shape: and 'in six or eight months time, observing 'no marks of her pregnancy, I grew 'perfectly easy with respect to her, and 'began to blame myself for my unjust 'suspicions, though I was still at a loss 'where to fix them. Indeed, my dear,' continued he, 'I can't help thinking 'Prudilla committed a greater crime, in 'thus endeavouring to ruin the reputa-'tion of a modest girl, by loading her 'with all the infamy of her own guilt, 'than in the very actions that gave oc-'casion to it. How depraved must have 'been her mind! How lost to every ge-'nerous and humane sentiment!—But 'tis happy for her, that she has had 'time to correct the irregularities of 'her passions. Censoriousness, inhu-'manity, and the indulgence of every 'selfish passion, are the natural conse-'quences of her sentiments of reli-'gion; a religion, which, respecting 'only God, regards every duty to man 'as low and contemptible: but so 'deeply are the kind affections imprint-'on the heart; so lovely does virtue, 'humanity, and generosity, appear to 'all mankind; that, however the minds 'of individuals are warped by selfish 'views, they cannot help secretly ap-'proving this temper in others: and 'even those of her sentiments, how-'ever contemptibly they speak of it, ge-'nerally shew by their actions, that 'they have the same obligations to na-'ture, the same impulses to goodness, 'with the rest of mankind: so that, 'however pernicious their religious sen-'timents may appear, with respect to 'their tendency, it very rarely happens 'that they have really such unhappy, 'such horrid effects.'

But I will trouble you no longer, Madam, with the repetition of a con-versation which begins to grow but little interesting. You will, I fancy, readily believe, that I am now sufficient-ly weary; for this is as true as that I am your ladyship's constant friend,

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XXXVII.

YOU find, Madam, by my two last letters, that I am arrived at the unexpected honour of being a step-mother:

mother: but whether I shall behave in such a manner as to support my new dignity with any degree of applause to myself, is a circumstance that I cannot yet be sure of. However, of this I am certain, that I was never in my life half so angry as I am now, at our writers of plays, novels, and romances, for continually drawing a step-mother as a monster in nature; and so terrible a creature, that one would be apt to conceive that she had not one feature that in the least resembled any part of a human being. And, indeed, in all my reading, which, in this way, has been pretty extensive, I can hardly recollect above one or two instances in which this inexorable tyrant had the least advantage above a tiger, a wolf, or a crocodile. That a bad woman should make a bad wife, and a worse step-mother, is not to be wondered at; especially, if covetousness, pride, ill-nature, and an extraordinary fondness for her own children, center in the same breast. But while there are such persons in the world as your ever-honoured aunt, you must be convinced, that an empty name can never change the disposition of the heart, and turn the most mild, the tenderest and most generous minds, into savage cruelty. By her example, Madam, I intend to regulate my conduct; and while I strive to imitate so fine a model, I must be a wretched copyist indeed, if I myself am not tolerably perfect.

Lucius seems extremely pleased at my manner of treating him; and a thousand times has he already thanked me, by his looks, and the most engaging expressions of tenderness. Two days after this day of wonders, we went to pay another visit to Prudilla. I was desirous of seeing the child; and easily imagined, that though Lucius was perfectly silent on this head, he could not avoid being much more so, though his fear of offending me might make him conceal it. As Mr. Stevens had torn the paper which contained a detail of his sister's guilt, we had lost the direction where to find the little creature, whom I now began to consider as one of the family. I, therefore, the evening before, proposed his sending a servant, with a letter, to give them notice when we intended to see them, and to desire that the infant might be brought to their house. Lucius readily embraced this proposal, and with a look, that seemed to speak much more than he expressed, seized hold of my hand, and thanked me for the care I took to anticipate his desires.

The next morning we set out pretty early; and, upon our arrival, Mr. Stevens, handing me out of the coach, conducted us in, when he must needs salute me, under the character of his sister; 'not in law,' said he, 'but against law: 'however, you are my sister, and you 'shall be my sister. I hope,' added he, 'you have heartily forgiven the penitent above stairs; if you have, you 'must let us see it, by taking care of 'her child: and, by this means, you 'will greatly oblige, not only me, your 'brother, and the bantling's uncle and 'guardian, but our good friend my 'young philosopher there, the baby's 'papa, whom, let me tell you, it is your 'duty to oblige.'

'O, Sir,' said I, 'I will not dispute 'with you about a name. If you can 'prove that you are any way related to 'me, I shall certainly esteem it an honour. As to the child, I can make 'no promises, I assure you: I can 'only say, that I will do my endeavour at least; and, though not from 'dull duty, I shall, from affection, a 'much more engaging motive, strive to 'contribute to the satisfaction of one 'who is nearer than a brother.'

'You are very good, Madam,' replied he, smiling; 'but as to the honour 'of being related to me, (in this manner I mean) I must confess that it is 'but very little. The poor brat, it 'must be acknowledged, is base-born; 'and, therefore, you are no more it's 'mother-in-law, than I am your brother-in-law I mean, by the law of 'the land. By the laws of nature 'and reason, indeed, you are much 'more nearly related; for, as this 'gentleman's wife, you are as much 'the mother of this child as if it had 'been born in marriage; for his marriage with my sister would not make 'the child more his than it is at present, 'and, consequently, your duty is, in 'both cases, the same.'

'I am quite of your mind, Sir,' said I: 'but where is this little creature? 'methinks I long to be acquainted 'with my new charge.'—'We shall 'have the young slut here by and by,' replied he; and then added gravely, 'But what is the matter with Lucius? 'See how thoughtful he looks! Why,

'I profess he has all the father in his 'face—it is written on his forehead. 'He has one child now, which, three 'days ago, I dare say he never so much as 'dreamed of, and, if I guess right, in 'three months or so, he will have ano-'ther. Is it not true, Madam? No 'wonder then, that he has the look of 'a patriarch. But, I hope, he has not 'lost his speech?'

'No, no, Sir,' said Lucius, with a smile; 'I have been listening very at-'tentively to you, and at the same 'time admiring the goodness of a lady 'that derives fresh charms from my guilt 'and folly.'—'Nay, nay,' cried he, 'there 'is no wonder that you should not find 'an opportunity to put in a single word, 'when a talkative old fellow, and a 'very fine lady, seem resolved to have 'all the discourse to themselves: when 'this is the case, you are too wise not 'to know, that the most complaisant 'thing the husband can do, is not to 'interrupt them. But is she so very 'good? Why then, I suppose, you have 'not had so much as a curtain-lecture 'upon this affair!'—'Far from it, I assure 'you,' replied Lucius. 'Then she is a 'dear, sweet little angel,' cried the old man; 'aye, and a goddess too; and—an '—an—I don't know what to call her; 'I can't think of a name half good 'enough. I could almost find in my 'heart to ravish a kiss from her for it; 'only I am afraid, that it will be a 'little unreasonable, that both should 'suffer a rape from our family. Let me 'tell you, Madam, that you are hap-'py in having an opportunity to shew 'a greatness of mind, that must for 'ever endear you to a man of sense. 'But whatever you are in reality, you 'are not to appear to the world in the 'character of a step-mother; the infant 'must be brought up as the child of a 'deceased friend, relation, or so; or, if 'Lucius will consent to it, let her be 'put under the care of his mother and 'Marilla.' This, Madam, will ease 'you of a considerable part of the care 'of your office, and, at the same time, 'you will have an opportunity of seeing 'her as often as you please.'

Lucius readily approved of this mo-tion; and I as readily agreeing to it, it was resolved that Sophronia, Lucius's mother, should be informed, by Mr. Stevens, of the whole affair. This be-ing immediately determined, he resum-ed, 'There are many advantages which 'will attend your concealing the truth 'from the world, besides the single con-'sideration of the reputation of the two 'families. You would, in some sense, 'be regarded by the world as a step-'mother; and though they would, 'doubtless, be ready to make some al-'lowance, in consideration of the slut's 'being base-born; yet the very name 'itself is generally here, in the country, 'the cause of discontent, and frequent 'uneasiness. It is an unthankful office. 'Every body takes pains to render her 'suspected by the little brats; they, 'without thought, are industrious to 'weaken her authority, by sowing, in 'their unthinking minds, the seeds of 'jealousy, distrust, and a spirit of con-'tradiction. And, let her be ever so 'good, let her have ever such an affec-'tion for the children, the slightest cor-'rection, the most gentle reproof, is 'aggravated into the most insupportable 'tyranny; every old woman in the pa-'rish bemoans their hard fate; and, let 'the urchins be guilty of ever so great 'a crime, they can't whimper, but the 'simple, well-meaning neighbours, cry 'out—"Ah, poor souls! if their own "mother was alive, they would not be "served so." The children easily 'imbibe these bad influences, and are 'inadvertently taught to hate a person 'who, perhaps, strives to love them; 'a woman who, from the time of her 'marriage, filled with a just sense of 'her duty, may have resolved to do 'them all the justice in her power, and 'to treat them with all possible lenity. 'Her case is very hard: all her endea-'vours to please are fruitless; a bad 'construction is put upon her kindest 'actions; she strives in vain; is un-'thanked; and, perhaps, repaid with 'ingratitude. And this, Madam, I 'have sometimes known to be the 'case of by far the best woman in the 'neighbourhood.'

'Really, Sir,' said I, 'you give a 'very shocking account of the uncom-'fortable state of being a mother-in-'law; enough to frighten any woman 'from the thoughts of marrying a man 'who has children: but, however, if she 'has the goodness to persevere in her 'kindness,

'kindneſs, ſhe muſt ſurely win them over 'at laſt; their prejudices muſt vaniſh; and, 'if Mr. Prior's remark be true, that—

"Malice vanquiſh'd, heightens virtue's "praiſe,"—

'ſhe will then have the ſatisfaction of a 'glorious revenge. Having made this 'noble conqueſt, ſhe will force them to 'do juſtice to her merit, and, in ſpite of 'themſelves, to give her their love, their 'eſteem, and their gratitude. What 'are all the ſubmiſſions in the world to 'this? To ſee their cheeks glow with 'affection, at the ſame time that they, 'with an honeſt bluſh, own their error; 'this is not only heaping coals of fire on 'their heads, but on their hearts too.'

'This is very true,' ſaid Lucius, ſmiling, and giving me a look of approbation; 'but few tempers can hold 'out againſt ill treatment. Ingratitude 'may ſometimes ſour the beſt minds; it 'too eaſily prompts them to make a re-'turn in kind: and, when this is the 'caſe, both the lady and the children 'are worthy of pity.'

We now went up ſtairs, where we found Prudilla in a much weaker condition than when we were here before: but we had hardly taken our ſeats, when we heard Mr. Stevens talking to a woman at the chamber-door; and having deſired her to ſtep down into the pantry to refreſh herſelf, came in with a child in his arms. Lucius and I aroſe: our eyes were fixed on the infant; which, ſmiling, held out it's little arms to me: but Mr. Stevens, not obſerving this, carried it to Prudilla; who, giving a deep ſigh, and looking upon it with eyes ſwimming with affection, deſired to kiſs it: but the child turned away; and, perhaps, frighted at her ghaſtly appearance, ſtill ſtruggled to come at me; which ſhe immediately did, the moment ſhe was ſet down at her mamma's knee.

This little incident, trifling as it was, gave me a good deal of pleaſure. I ſat down; and placing her on my lap, gave her a kiſs: ſhe fondled me; and, with an innocent ſmile, ſtroked my face for half a minute, ſaying—'Ah, poor!' then giggled, and laid her pretty hand in my boſom. I could not help being fond of the dear creature. I kiſſed her ſeveral times, without even knowing why I did it: it was giving way to an impulſe which I could not reſiſt. I conſidered her as a part of my dear Lucius; I endeavoured to trace in her face ſome of his well-known features. I caſt my eyes on him, that I might be able to form a more accurate judgment of the reſemblance; when I could not help obſerving that, with a look of peculiar pleaſure, he ſeemed to watch all my actions, while, at the ſame time, his countenance was overſpread with a ſoftneſs that methought expreſſed a paternal affection working in his heart. While I was thus engaged in endeavouring to trace out, and, by the help of fancy, to prove a likeneſs between the lineaments of a face that was placed before me, and thoſe in miniature placed near my boſom, my glances frequently met his; and the ſatisfaction and delight that appeared in them, gave an additional applauſe to that which aroſe from the indulgence of theſe fooleries. Lucius, notwithſtanding this viſible ſatisfaction, ſtill continued ſilent, and ſeemed at a loſs how to behave, though ſo many expreſſions of my tenderneſs might well be ſuppoſed to authorize him; and I was juſt going to chide him for it, when Prudilla, with a ſigh, cried, in a very peeviſh and jealous tone, that ſhe thought it very hard that ſhe might not have the pleaſure of kiſſing her own child; that ſhe ſaw plainly I ſhould ſpoil it; and that it was an odd way of ſhewing my kindneſs, to take her from a perſon that muſt be ſuppoſed to love her better than I or any body elſe could do. Lucius coloured, and, giving her a look of indignation, was going to ſpeak, when Mr. Stevens began; for he being let into the important ſecret, was now ſuffered to continue in the room. 'What do you 'mean, ſiſter?' ſaid he, in a haſty, ſevere manner; 'would you not have the lady 'love the child? If you are ſo jealous 'that nobody muſt be fond of her but 'yourſelf, e'en take her with you. A 'good mother would think herſelf very 'happy in leaving it to the care of a 'perſon who is diſpoſed to be fond of it.' —'A good mother!' returned ſhe, crying: 'you are always reproaching me 'with my guilt; why muſt I be told 'of it? why muſt I be upbraided with 'being a mother? But yet it is too 'true—to my ſhame it is. Would to 'God I had never been a mother! 'Would to God I had never deſerved to 'be a mother!'—'See there now,' cried Mr. Stevens; 'I proteſt there is no ſuch 'thing

'thing as speaking to her. I reproach 'you!—Well, but it's no matter.' And then addressing himself to me—'Dear 'Madam,' said he, 'excuse this treat-'ment. My sister's illness makes her 'so peevish, that she hardly knows what 'she says. Be so good as to let me take 'the child.'

Lucius and I stared; and it was not without some struggles that I stifled my resentment. I was two or three times going to break out, and to interrupt them; and had I followed the first dictates of my passion, so much was I provoked at her manner of speaking, that I should have disowned all my tenderness to the child, though my heart would have given the lye to my words, and have vented much more bitter reproaches than those she received from her brother; and, perhaps, in the heat of my resentment, I might have told her that, to oblige her, I would readily disclaim all relation to it. But a few moments reflection, and the sight of Lucius, made me resolve to speak in a different manner; and Mr. Stevens's good-natured apology, not to speak at all. Could I, Madam, have said any thing that would have displeased Lucius more? Could I have behaved in a manner more contrary to the settled disposition of my mind? Yet passion would have done what my reason would for ever have disallowed. Mr. Stevens took the child, who clung to me, and, giving me a beseeching look, cried at parting. He stepped with her to his sister; and setting her on one of the arms of the chair, she had just strength enough to keep her from falling. She kissed her two or three times; but had hardly had her a minute, when saying that her crying distracted her head, she desired that somebody would take the naughty girl from her. Lucius seized her in his arms; and, first seeming to observe my looks, hugged her to his bosom, kissed her with the affection of a tender parent, and then brought her to me, and desired her to kiss me, which she readily did. He smiled; and being apprehensive that Prudilla's ill temper might again shew itself, wished her better, and we both took our leave, Mr. Stevens calling for the nurse to take the child. While we were at dinner, Mr. Stevens renewed his apologies; and at the same time told me, that he had been so provoked at seeing my goodness, as he called it, so ungratefully returned, that, notwithstanding his sister's illness, he had much ado to behave towards her with any degree of decency. And on this score, too, Lucius vindicated his silence; alledging, that if he had once begun to reproach her, his heat of temper would, in all probability, have made him treat her in such a manner as might have been attended with very ill consequences with respect to her. I was not, I confess, entirely satisfied with this reason; I was insulted on his account, and had been shocked with reproaches in the midst of a glow of tenderness, and while I was giving a high testimony of my affection to him, and engaged in an employment which my affronted pride made me almost look upon as an act of supererogation. However, I seemed to admit of his excuse; and, as I made no reply, but took pains to curb and conceal the remains of my ill temper, which had now pretty well subsided, he seemed to think me perfectly satisfied with it.

You see, Madam, that I can be out of humour without cause. Lucius was certainly in the right; for how barbarous would it have been in him to have retaliated an affront on a woman on the very verge of life, merely for a weakness and peevish fretfulness, which her illness, added to her uneasy reflections, might well excuse! And had the consequences been what he had just reason to dread, I am sure he would never have forgiven himself.

Our conversation, Madam, for the rest of the day, was so little interesting, that I shall not trouble either you or myself with a repetition of it. And, indeed, I have already given you trifles enough to make you think this a most trifling letter. My mind was, however, in a most delightful situation all the afternoon, and particularly when we took our leave; and the engaging manner in which Lucius made his acknowledgments upon our return home in the coach, strengthened and confirmed every delightful sensation. 'My dear Felicia,' said he, taking hold of my hand, and giving me a look expressive of every thing that can be called tender and generous; 'how 'kind, how obliging, is your whole be-'haviour! How agreeable is my sur-'prize, to find nothing but the dearest 'proofs of affection where I expected to 'meet with reproach; and to see you ge-'nerously overlook a crime which would 'raise the indignation of almost every

'other

'other woman! To see you cares a 'child which is not your own! A child 'that is—— But I can't find words to 'express half my meaning. Is all my 'tenderness too little for you, that you 'must thus endeavour to encrease it 'with the most sensible obligations, and 'to add to love the highest admiration 'and gratitude?'—'How much are you 'mistaken!' cried I, laughing. 'What 'will you say, if I tell you that I know 'many ladies, and, I believe, some of 'strict virtue too, who have adopted it 'as a maxim, that "a reformed rake "makes the best husband!" This is 'really a most ridiculous, as well as in-'decent assertion; and, whenever it is 'tried, a most dangerous experiment: 'but as vanity makes them always flat-'ter themselves that their charms are ca-'pable of producing this wonderful re-'formation, they are hardly ever afraid 'of marrying, even the most abandoned 'libertine, though sunk a thousand de-'grees below the dignity of a man. Pray 'what would these people say to a fault 'which must appear extremely small 'when compared to years spent in the 'diabolical employment of ruining in-'nocence, and in all the cruel infernal 'arts of falshood, deceit, and trea-'chery?'—'I am surprized, my dear,' said Lucius, 'that ladies who have 'adopted such a pernicious opinion, 'should have so little prudence as to 'make it publick. Have they no sense 'of modesty? Can they be insensible 'that people will be apt to charge them 'with being influenced by desires that 'prompt them only to approve a man 'who has given before-hand convincing 'testimonies of his ability to gratify 'them; and that, for a certainty of this, 'they will sacrifice every other consi-'deration, and prefer him who has 'proved himself a villain? You know, 'my dear, it is not such as these I 'meant. I would not do you the in-'jury to mention your name with theirs, 'nor am I solicitous about the dislike or 'approbation of such as these; but that 'you should thus generously hide my 'faults, how can I sufficiently thank 'you! That you, who are modesty it-'self, a friend to every virtue, should, 'instead of upbraidings, lavish your 'tenderness, and, with all the blan-'dishments of love, cares an infant 'that——' 'Hold, hold, my dear,' cried I, laughing; 'a truce to your flat-'tery, I beseech you. Pray, how long 'have we been married? Above nine 'months, I believe. It is high time, 'sure, to have done with compliments. 'Why, we ought to have had twice as 'many quarrels; and, to follow the 'mode, we should, before this time, have 'begun heartily to hate each other. But 'to be serious,' added I, with a gravity much more suitable to the present disposition of my mind than this flight, which, however lively, was all affectation; 'to 'what purpose should I torture you, by 'reproaching you with a fault long since 'passed? Can I give you pain without 'feeling it myself? Since none of us 'are perfect, ought I not rather to re-'joice that you have so few faults, and 'so many virtues to counterbalance 'them? I am very sensible, that should 'a young woman, with the same temp-'tation, so readily forfeit her honour, 'she would be entirely inexcusable, and 'her crime would admit of but little 'alleviation. I am sensible, too, that 'though she would suffer the greatest 'infamy by becoming a mother, your 'crime, in the eye of Heaven, may be 'as great as hers; yet the world, that 'would condemn her, will excuse you. 'And shall I be more obdurate, and 'less ready to forgive, than a stranger? 'I, who have improved by your exam-'ple, and who owe to you a vast acqui-'sition in knowledge, and in many su-'blimely delicate sensations? It was 'you who first taught me to converse 'with myself, to know the pleasures of 'reflection, and all the delight that ac-'companies heavenly gratitude and love. 'With all these obligations, have I rea-'son to complain that you are a man, 'and not an angel? Though you have 'been frail, your mind is still untainted. 'I have not the least fear of your infi-'delity to me. It is my duty, it is my 'interest, to make you happy; and I 'hope it will always be, as it is now, 'my highest pleasure. O Lucius! where 'could I have found a husband like you? 'for, as Hamlet says of his father, "Take you for all in all, I ne'er shall "look upon your like again."

Lucius embraced me; but told me he might, with far greater justice, retort the charge of flattery upon me. He confessed that he had many imperfections, and the most tender and obliging things were said on both sides; but I have now neither the leisure nor inclination to re-

peat

peat them. May every refined delight be yours; and may your ladyship ever be as happy as is, at present, your sincerest friend,

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XXXVIII.

I Am very glad, Madam, to find that both you and your aunt approve my conduct: but if you make my letters so publick as to shew them your friends, you will oblige me, in spite of my own inclinations, to write with more reserve. The account of the dispute between her and you, on the propriety of Lucius's reproving a young woman whom he thought a partner in his guilt, is very diverting; but I am more pleased to find that confidence and unreserve with which I have related certain events, and which I was not altogether satisfied with, sufficiently justified by her observations. It is with inexpressible delight I hear her say—That the ingenuity of mind which could prompt him to undertake so irksome a task, and the modest diffidence that accompanied his behaviour to me, so opposite to the bold confidence of a man who would rather glory in his guilt, place him in so fair a view, as to make him, in her opinion, more amiable than if he had wanted this shade to heighten the lights which form the portrait I have given of his character.—

After this compliment to Lucius, would not any one imagine that I was a tolerable painter? She talks of lights and shades mutually setting off each other; and what else is necessary to compleat the picture? How unreasonable is it in her, to insist upon your desiring me to present her with a more finished piece, and to give the portrait of his mind in one view! But you must be obeyed. And yet how difficult is the task! Where shall I begin? He has all those endearing impressions of humanity, those native traces of goodness, which the mind approves upon the first view. His virtue costs him little or no pains, it springs freely from his soul; while the easy sweetness with which it is accompanied, lets every one see that it is attended with all the pleasures of self-gratification: it is the result of a refined taste, a correct imagination, and a settled judgment. From hence his beneficence derives it's virtue, as well as it's source, and not from a consideration of the pleasure that accompanies it. In short, he has a mind so noble, so disinterestedly and freely virtuous, that a person who would represent virtue at a continual war with ourselves, would scarcely allow him to have any virtue at all. Nay, if there be any foundation for the opinion of those gentlemen who place the perfection of a virtuous action in the opposition it meets with from nature, he is absolutely incapable of performing one, either generous in itself, or acceptable to his God. If this commonly received opinion be true, it will prove that no one, who has not first been a compleat villain, can possibly attain to the sublime character of a good man; that he who fluctuates between the rage of appetite on the one hand, and his duty on the other, is the fairest character upon earth; and that a man of regular desires, a man of strict honour, acting from the most generous motives, is the most unhappy creature living; since his virtues, becoming by practice in a manner constitutional, must lose all their value, and consequently their reward. But let it be considered, that the *strength* of every vicious propensity is only the *weakness* of the opposite virtue; that a reluctance to an act of humanity can only proceed from the hardness of a heart petrified by a criminal selfishness; and that the very suspence between virtue and vice tarnishes the virtue, though it should become victorious. Can that be an imperfection in man which is the glory of all the higher orders of created beings, and even of the great Creator himself? For, as a most ingenious author says—'If compulsion be the essence 'of virtue, the conduct of even the Su- 'preme Being has much less merit in it 'than the most disingenuous of his crea- 'tures: for, to practise virtue, the *high-* 'est degrees of virtue, without *constraint*; 'to pursue it upon a principle of free 'choice, for the mere pleasure and ap- 'probation of the thing itself, as his 'glory and his happiness; is what con- 'stitutes our idea of the divine perfec- 'tion: and shall the same thing, which 'gives such a superlative grace and lustre 'to the divine character, cast a shade 'upon the human? So that, after all, 'constraint and self-denial are so far 'from being *necessary* to virtue, that it

'is

'is mere *weakneſs*, and want of virtue, 'that gives them either uſe or expedi-'ency*.'

Thus, Madam, I have been at the pains of embelliſhing my letter, and ſetting off my own reflections, with a long quotation, to contradict a favourite opinion of your aunt's, and to prove that my dear Lucius may be a good man without having a violent inclination to be a bad one. There are inſtances, it is true, in which virtue is attended with ſome degree of ſelf-denial; and this would, doubtleſs, have been the caſe of Lucius, had he had virtue to refuſe the proffered favours of the unknown Prudilla: but, however difficult the conqueſt is at firſt, a ſteady adherence removes every obſtacle; the temptation ariſing from future attacks becomes leſs and leſs as the mind becomes more perfect; perſeverance treads down the briars, and makes the path plain, eaſy, and delightful; unnumbered beauties open to our view, and the rugged road becomes the lawn of pleaſure; the mind is at leiſure calmly to contemplate the divine landſcape that lies before it, to enjoy the fragrant breeze, to taſte the charms of conſcious innocence budding with golden fruit; and, above all, with rapture to behold the ſmiles of Heaven, beaming celeſtial light and divine complacency.

But whither am I rambling? It is time to trace back my ſteps, and, like a good wife, to return to my huſband; and, as I flatter myſelf that I have done him juſtice, I will proceed with his character, which will be beſt illuſtrated by his conduct. His uſual employment is in giving joy to a number of grateful dependants; and ſometimes Marilla and I have the ſatisfaction of joining with him in little acts of beneficence and compaſſion. When there are immediate objects of diſtreſs before him, how readily does his ſenſible heart catch their ſorrows! how ſpeedily does he anticipate their wiſhes, and turn their grief into admiration and joy! while his affability and condeſcenſion give an irreſiſtible grace to his benefits. But not contented with doing good, when forcibly touched by objects of pity, he endeavours to prevent the leaſt approach of unhappineſs and miſery; and provides againſt the poor's aſking for relief, by placing them above the want of it.

With regard to this his principal view, he has laid a plan for making conſiderable alterations in the garden. To ſerve the poor, he has already levelled giants* with the ground, demoliſhed enchanted caſtles, and will ſhortly, by an arrangement of more natural beauties, utterly baniſh the *phantaſtical*; which, like the Chineſe paintings, can only pleaſe by ſhewing a kind of reſemblance of nature in the moſt whimſical and natural proportions. The choiceſt flowers, inſtead of being depoſited in knots, are to be careleſsly ſtrewed amongſt the ſhort graſs; and being mingled with every ſpecies that adorn the fields, will, in the moſt beautiful manner, brocade the velvet carpet; while the tulip, auricula, and carnation; and all thoſe whoſe riſing ſtalks would render them liable to be broken by the undiſtinguiſhing foot or the roller, are to retire to the margin of our walks, and ſkulking cloſe, to ſeek protection from the nicely-cut verdant walls and obeliſks that are ſtill to retain their form. We are to have, in one part, groves and viſtos of evergreens; while, in another, the vine, the honeyſuckle, and the ivy, are to entwine the barren trunks, and mingle with the branches, of a row of elms that extend acroſs the extremity of the garden, but which, at every walk, leave an opening to let in a view of the neighbouring country. Thus, in thoſe ſeaſons when the rain or the froſt withholds ſubſiſtence from the families of our poor tenants, we ſhall always find them employment till they can return again to their uſual labours. By this means our moſt agreeable accommodations will become of extenſive benefit, and our very amuſements accompanied with thoſe pleaſing ſenſations which reſult from a calm, undiſturbed benevolence.

The man who has perſonal merit, may ſafely depend on being treated by Lucius with the utmoſt reſpect, though his circumſtances are ever ſo low; for his poverty, ſo far from being a reproach, ſeems, in his opinion, to entitle him to a ſuperior kind of deference. He relieves them with an air that ſhews he is only paying a debt due to humanity; and ſo cautious is he of giving a ſhock to

* See Philemon to Hydaſpes, the ſecond converſation upon falſe religion.
† See Letter XXVIII.

his sensibility, that he has the look rather of a person obliged, than of one conferring an obligation. For the relief of distressed merit he denies himself many of the elegancies of life, and particularly those of the table, from which every costly, luxurious superfluity is banished. The meanness of a man's natural abilities never inspires him with contempt; if his heart be good, it is all that he requires. Though he cannot give him the esteem due to a friend, he is, in his opinion, a much more amiable character than the man that wants humanity, though possessed of every other qualification that can entitle him to respect; and indeed, without this, fine sense, the most brilliant wit, the most profound erudition, added to the glare of wealth and high birth, can extort no more from him than a stiff, formal civility. He is, in one word, an enemy to nothing but vice and affectation; but he can ridicule the latter, and yet give the person a share of his esteem. His conversation, indeed, wants that brisk gaiety and sprightliness of fancy, and all the light and airy sallies of imagination, which we comprehend under the term *wit*; and as to repartee, he seldom indulges it. He has but little taste for these sparkling advantages in others; he regards them in too mean a light, and therefore is not sufficiently sensible how much these natural accomplishments give a brilliancy to conversation. When he talks, his strong sense is enlivened by a happy turn, a natural elegance of expression; and his language, like his sentiments, is not only just, but sublime. Yet gravity is not always agreeable, and there are moments when folly becomes pleasing, and we find a delight in being ridiculous: from hence wit derives it's most pleasing charms; for with too much wisdom we are sometimes apt to mope into dulness. But this is a case that rarely happens with him, though sometimes it does with me. His spirits flow with a smooth and even stream; whilst I, having sometimes airy flights, am subject to sink into a dulness which folly and impertinence are best adapted to relieve.

You need not be told, Madam, that this is partly my case at present; the heaviness of my expressions, towards the conclusion of what I have written, sufficiently indicates that of my mind. I have lost myself in drawing a character every way so dear to me, in describing a man whose soul is the soul of friendship; no wonder then that my spirits flag. But, after all, your ladyship will perhaps think, that my affection carries me too far; and that while I am painting the *husband*, I am only discovering the fondness of the *wife*. I will therefore, in pity to you, as well as myself, finish this pleasing, though difficult subject; and, to secure myself from the double charge of dulness and partiality, leave, at least, half his virtues untold. With my sincerest compliments to your other self, and your very good aunt, I am your ladyship's most obedient

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XXXIX.

DEAR MADAM,

I Can now inform you, that Mr. Stevens has been at Mr. Manly's, where he had an opportunity of an hour or two's conversation with Sophronia and Marilla; when, to their no small surprize, under the seal of secrecy, he unfolded the whole affair relating to the child, and they readily agreed to take the pretty infant into their care. After this he went to my aunt's, where he found her son, who arrived the day before from his travels, and who was just returned from paying a visit to Mellifont, and his sister Amelia. As he was just setting out to see us, Mr. Stevens altered his intention of staying there to dinner, and readily agreed to accompany him. Accordingly they arrived, attended by a very smart young gentleman, who had commenced an acquaintance with my cousin while they were abroad, from the single consideration of their being countrymen: they therefore returned together; and as his friends lived in Yorkshire, he made my aunt's in his way home, and, at my cousin's request, consented to stay with him two or three days, to rest and refresh himself on his journey.

Lucius received them all with great respect, though Mr. Stevens was, I believe, the most welcome visitor. The gentleman, who was an absolute stranger to every body present except my cousin, made an agreeable appearance; he had an easy flow of words, and an animated expression; but his conversation was that of a professed

profeſſed libertine. He ſwore very fluently, and endeavoured to divert us with a recapitulation of ſeveral of his adventures in France and Italy. My couſin had ſo much leſs of the gentleman in his behaviour, as he had more affectation; and indeed he had acquired nothing by his travels that I could diſcover, but a low kind of knowledge, that he had better have been without, a greater ſtock of vanity and folly, and a knack of impertinently introducing a little French. And that his converſation might want nothing to render it diſagreeable, he ſwore twice as much as his companion: for he had ſcarcely ſat down, when taking a glaſs of wine, he cried, with a ridiculous, affected grin—'Sblood, Madam, you ſee that I have 'loſt *rien* by my travels, and ſo, damme, 'a *votres ſervice*—Ha, ha, ha!—Why 'lookee, that is as much as to ſay, My 'ſervice to ye.'

We had but once before the honour of entertaining ſuch company; however, as this was the firſt time of our ſeeing my couſin after a long abſence, and as the other was both his friend and an abſolute ſtranger to us, good manners, or rather the cuſtom of the world, would not ſuffer us to hazard the giving them an affront, by a reproof, which, however juſt in itſelf, would have been taken as a groſs inſult. Dinner was but juſt over, when we were agreeably ſurprized with a viſit from a very worthy gentleman, the miniſter of the pariſh. But it was ſome time before we received any relief from his company: and indeed, though reproof was more ſuitable to his character than ours, I ſoon found that he alſo had too much of the ſame good-breeding to interrupt them. The ſtranger ran on with his intrigues, referring every minute to my couſin, to whom he always gave the name of his pocket-book, to know either the preciſe time of an event, or the name of the place where the important trifle was tranſacted; when the latter, to ſhew his exact punctuality, and to indulge, perhaps, a kind of vanity in diſplaying the ſtrength of a memory wholly taken up with trifles, was ſure to launch out into twenty particulars foreign to the queſtion. He never forgot the name of the meaneſt village; and if he was aſked what any town was called where they had dined, he not only readily replied, but added of his own accord the ſign at the gate of the inn, what they had for dinner, whether the wine was good or bad, and ſome little adventure of his own, and this by way of epiſode; for when he had done, he always put the other in mind to go on again: 'But, *damme, Jack!*—'*as you was a ſaying—allons—allons,*' conſtantly concluded whatever my wiſe couſin had to ſay. Thus they played into each other's hands, while we had nothing elſe to do but, like humble auditors, to liſten to their impertinence.

The tea-table did not procure us any intermiſſion; and finding the clergyman had no intention to interpoſe, I ſtept aſide into the next room, deſiring him to follow me; where I told him, that he would oblige me if he would take upon himſelf the trouble of giving them a gentle reproof; for I could not bear to hear them ſwear with ſuch uncontrouled freedom. He promiſed that he would, and we returned to our chairs. We had hardly ſat down, when my couſin gave him a very favourable opportunity; for accidentally ſpilling a little tea upon his legs, he began to curſe, and ſtamp, and ſwear, like a madman; but no damage being done, he was preſently eaſy, when the clergyman obſerved, in a very handſome manner, that he could not help being ſo unpolite as to think ſwearing a very poor accompliſhment in a gentleman; that it was a vice that wanted even the colour of temptation to excuſe it, having neither the allurements of pleaſure nor profit. 'The predominance 'of this profane practice,' added he, 'frequently calls for the moſt earneſt 'exhortations from the pulpit; and I 'lately preached a ſermon on the ſub-'ject, which I wiſh you had had the 'benefit of hearing.'

This reproof gave me a ſecret ſatisfaction; and I was going to ſecond what he had ſaid, when the ſtranger replied—'And pray, doctor, be ſo good as to 'tell us what ſucceſs this performance 'of yours had? I hope in the Lord you 'made a pretty many converts, for 'to be ſure nobody could withſtand 'the force of your reaſoning.' The reverend gentleman, I muſt confeſs, looked a little ſilly and diſconcerted. My couſin laughed, and jogging Lucius with his elbow, and at the ſame time winking with one eye, cried, juſt loud enough to be heard by all the company, '*Du diable!* did you mind him, hay '—zoons, twig the parſon.'—'Well,

'well,' cried Lucius, smiling, 'I heard 'the sermon the gentleman mentions; 'and, I assure you, it was a very good 'one. I take this opportunity, Sir, 'to thank you for it; but you must ex- 'cuse me if I am of a different opinion 'from you in this particular. Swear- 'ing is certainly attended with both 'pleasure and profit; and was I to 'preach a sermon, it should be to prove 'it.'

The stranger appeared quite at a loss, and rubbing his forehead, I heard him mutter to himself—'I will be damn'd 'if I can tell what to make of this! 'Pleasure and Profit! Old Sir Crape 'is in the right; but what the devil 'does the gentleman mean? After 'all it is a cursed foolish custom.' My cousin, clapping Lucius on the back, seemed mightily delighted, without knowing why. Mr. Stevens was in a deep suspense, and looked at Lucius with extreme attention; while I was perfectly astonished. I had been expecting some grave and judicious remark; and did not doubt but that Lucius would advance something new on the subject, that might, for the present at least, put a stop to their profane impertinence; when I was all at once mortified to find that I had spoke to the reverend gentleman to little purpose, since he was resolved to take their part, and to countenance what I knew his heart must condemn. 'Fie, fie, Sir!' cried the clergyman after a little hesitation, and with a tone and look that shewed him equally pleased and dissatisfied, 'You joke, I am sure 'you do. Make a sermon in praise of 'swearing! God forbid! 'tis all a joke.' —'Indeed,' said Lucius, 'I am in ear- 'nest. Don't you think I should make 'some converts? It is a taking subject; 'quite new, I believe, Sir.'—'Phu, 'phu, Converts! Perverts!' cried the good gentleman, with some warmth; 'aye, converts for Satan indeed. Dear 'Sir, for Heaven's sake don't talk in this 'manner.' My cousin was now all life; he seized Lucius's hand, crying—'Ay, 'do give us, do, *un sermon sur des sen- 'mens*. Ha, ha, ha! You see I am a 'wit. I'll be cursed if I don't listen 'to you; faith! I will remember every 'word. Come, begin, commence.'— 'No, no,' cried Lucius, 'why in such 'haste? I am not used to preaching, and 'therefore, as this will be my first per- 'formance, a day or two's time is little 'enough to prepare myself.' If you will 'all give me the favour of your com- 'pany the day after to-morrow, I will 'oblige you. Meanwhile, I must de- 'sire you, and this gentleman, your 'friend, to consider the matter seri- 'ously, and prepare yourselves to anti- 'cipate what I shall have to say; by 'this means you will justify this prac- 'tice to your own minds, and whenever 'you are attacked in this manner again, 'be ready, with my assistance, to vin- 'dicate yourselves to the world, as well 'as your own consciences. I would 'have every body act from principle; 'and therefore I must beg you to en- 'deavour to suspend the practice, only 'till you can recollect some good argu- 'ments for it's vindication: this cannot 'surely be very long—a quarter of an 'hour, perhaps, may furnish you with 'sufficient motives; but if not, I would 'not have you be discouraged; there 'can be no great hurt in waiting till 'you hear my lecture, which, I dare 'promise you, will furnish the strongest 'and most convincing reasons for your 'continuing the laudable practice. But 'you must permit me, gentlemen,' added he with a smile, 'as your advocate 'and friend, to insist upon one condi- 'tion, and that is, that I may be al- 'lowed to swear the first oath, and give 'the first curse.' The stranger immediately gave his consent to this proposition, which he acknowledged to be reasonable enough; while my cousin, with a look of pleasure, precipitately replied, (at the same time giving a stamp with his foot, and rubbing his hands) 'Damn it; and so you shall, *de tout mon 'cœur*, by——' 'Hold, hold,' cried Lucius; 'I appeal to the company, if 'this be using me well.'

Though we were at a loss to know what he was driving at, we all gave our assent, and I proposed that he should suffer some penalty. The poor youth was self-condemned, and scratching his head, begged pardon, telling us, it was not done with design: but Lucius was inexorable; he pulled out his watch, and proposed, that he should be obliged to be silent for five minutes; and this sentence being approved, he added, to punish him farther, that he himself would not swear till he could find an opportunity of introducing an oath in such a manner as to give a grace to the sentence.

The

The tea-things had been taken away for some time, Mr. Stevens had lighted his pipe, and the watch was placed on the table before Lucius, which my cousin, during the time of his silence, continued to examine with the closest attention: mean while the clergyman expressed his surprize at Lucius's behaviour, and let us know, that he would not only hear him, but would sit up all night to answer so wicked a sermon; and he did not doubt but he should be able to overturn all his arguments; and therefore invited the company to hear him the succeeding day at church, when he would let them see that a good cause could suffer nothing by being attacked; adding, that as he had truth and religion on his side, he did not doubt but he should be enabled, through divine assistance, to convince, if not to reform, them. Lucius requested that he would hear him before he promised too much; and told him, that he himself, with all his zeal, might approve what he now condemned: however, he desired him to wait with patience, and, if he was not convinced, he would certainly attend to hear his own arguments refuted. But the stranger was averse to the proposal of going to church; and my dumb cousin shewed his dislike to the motion, by signs, till he had liberty to speak; and then he loudly exclaimed against it.

The conversation was now more equally divided, and, at the same time, it was rendered less shocking; for whatever were Lucius's secret intentions, which we were yet unacquainted with, he had already, by siding with them, produced a more happy effect than would probably have attended all his remonstrances. Our two travellers spoke slowly, and with abundance of precaution; and while we were all watching them, my cousin was watching Lucius, frequently interrupting him, to let him know that in such a place he might handsomely introduce an oath; but Lucius had the advantage of constantly proving that it would flatten, or perplex, the sense of the sentence: when waiting about half an hour to no purpose, my cousin, and his friend, perhaps tired of this restraint, took their leave, and in the most obliging manner left us at liberty to indulge the pleasure of a free and unreserved conversation.

The clergyman saw, and confessed the force of Lucius's stratagem; but could comprehend nothing of the sermon, or his reasons for contradicting an assertion that had all the force of a self-evident truth; and as he was now under less restraint, became very inquisitive, in order to search into the motives of this extraordinary conduct: but all the answer he could obtain from Lucius was, that he was really in earnest, and that he would give him no reason to be dissatisfied with his performance. So that he was obliged to wait, as well as the others, till the time appointed to gratify his curiosity took place.

Lucius had this day acted in a manner quite opposite to his usual conduct; and I now saw that the man who had hitherto behaved with such an artless simplicity of manners, had regulated his general behaviour from principle, and from choice; since we found that he was able, upon occasion, to assume a character opposite to his own: and if this, Madam, contradicts any thing I have said of him in my last letter, pray impute it to my ignorance of his abilities. The rest of the afternoon was spent very agreeably; and Mr. Stevens, before he took his leave, gave me a hint, that he saw plainly that Lucius was only playing upon the two travellers; and added, that he would not lose the opportunity of visiting us on Saturday for any consideration.

The next day, and part of Saturday, Lucius continued locked up in his closet, attended only by young Trueman, who served him as an amanuensis. The company came at the time appointed, together with Mellifont, my aunt, and Amelia, who had received an imperfect account of the affair from her brother; so that Lucius had a tolerable audience. As soon as they were seated, he asked the two friends, whether they had seriously considered the affair, and if they had found out any important advantages attending the use of oaths and curses in conversation. The stranger ingenuously confessed, that he had considered it pretty closely, and that, so far from seeing any advantage in it, he really began to be ashamed of the habit, and declared, that if he was to think much more about it, he should be obliged to leave it off; for the more he thought of it, the more indefensible it appeared. Lucius then desiring that nobody present would take any exceptions to any thing he said, rose up and began; while all present, having their curiosity stretched to the utmost extent,

tent, seemed to listen with extreme eagerness and attention. And, as I imagine that yours is attended with little less impatience, I here send you a copy, which Trueman has just transcribed for your use.

A

SERMON

IN

PRAISE OF SWEARING IN CONVERSATION.

DEUT. vi. 13. The latter part of the verse.

And SHALL *swear by his name.*

'THERE is a set of men in the 'world, who need only be known 'in order to be despised; men, who are 'a constant subject for ridicule, and 'justly the derision of the gay and more 'refined part of the human species; men 'who are so stupid, as to be more enamoured with the pleasure of a benevolent action, more charmed with giving joy to the helpless and miserable, with drying up the tears of the distressed, or soothing the agonies of the bursting heart, than with the lordly 'pride of wanton power, than in rendering the wretched more wretched, than 'with spurning at patient merit, or even 'the satisfaction of racking tenants, 'hoarding wealth, or all the high gratification of a debauch; more delighted 'with the visionary pleasure of indulging their own reflections, and the applause of a good conscience, than with 'the charms of a bottle, the transports 'afforded by the lascivious wanton, or 'all the high-wrought indulgences of 'a luxurious appetite. And, in one 'word, to sum up their character, more 'afraid of a false, or even an unnecessary 'oath, than of the point of a sword.

'It is with these poor, mean-spirited 'wretches, that I am now to combat, 'in order to shew the great advantages 'that attend a strict compliance with 'the injunction in my next, *And thou 'shalt swear by his name.* I shall not 'here take up your time in examining 'the context, or even in considering 'what is meant by the command in my 'text, which some would confine to the 'necessary oaths taken in a court of 'judicature; but, like all sound divines, 'and in compliance with the custom of 'all good commentators and disputants, 'consider the passage before us in that 'latitude which is most adapted to 'answer my particular design.

'One man takes his text, and endeavours, with the most elaborate eloquence, to prove that the Bible he 'preaches from is a work not fit to be 'read; that it never was designed for 'the instruction of such blockheads as 'his audience, who, by looking into it, 'incur damnation. What concerns 'all to know, must be read by none 'but the priest, or whom he shall appoint. How glorious that revelation, 'which, in the hands of the multitude, 'points the way to misery; but, in those 'of the church, to eternal life! It is the 'alone who can infallibly inform us, 'that love, and charity, and compassion, 'and tenderness, so often mentioned in 'that old book the Bible, mean spite, 'and hatred, and inquisition, and burning faggots.

'Another, with pious snuffle, and all 'the moving force of sighs and groans, 'proves that the God of truth is the God 'of falsehood; and finds his scheme 'contradicted by the language of Scripture, for Scripture nicely distinguishes 'between a revealed and a secret will, 'both opposite, both contradictory to 'each other. Scripture he proves to 'be a lye; his opinion he proves to be 'true from Scripture. He wisely turns 'out common sense, to make room for 'grace. He degrades reason as being 'in league with the devil, and, in the 'pious ardour of his heart, saves himself the trouble of thinking, and cries 'out—*I believe, because it is impossible.* Ye deists, rejoice in these your 'friends! Admit them into your societies! They, like you, can darken 'truth; they have assisted you in setting fragment against fragment; and, 'when the dazzling sun-beams shine too 'bright, can wisely shut their eyes. Let 'me too be permitted to rank myself on 'this side, and, countenanced by such 'great authorities, to take a text that 'suits my present purpose, regardless 'of every other passage that may be supposed to contradict it; nay, regardless 'of the text itself, any farther than as 'it may serve for a plausible introduction to what I have to offer.

'It is sufficient, therefore, that we 'have here a command to swear by the 'name

'name of God; which I shall take, in 'the common and vulgar sense of the 'word Swearing, to mean, not only all 'manner of oaths, but whatever goes 'under the denomination of swearing in 'conversation, as oaths, curses, and 'imprecations.

'In treating this subject, I shall con-'sider—

'I. The many advantages attending 'the frequent use of oaths, curses, and 'imprecations: in which will be suf-'ficiently proved, the falseness of that 'assertion, that swearing is attended 'with neither pleasure nor profit.

'II. Answer some objections. And,

'III. Make a suitable application.

'I. I am to consider the many ad-'vantages arising from a frequent use 'of oaths, curses, and imprecations.

'In the *first* place, this genteel ac-'complishment is a wonderful help to 'discourse; as it supplies the want of 'good sense, learning, and eloquence. 'The illiterate and stupid, by the help 'of oaths, become orators; and he, 'whose wretched intellects would not 'permit him to utter a coherent sen-'tence, by this easy practice, excites the 'laughter, and fixes the attention, of a 'brilliant and joyous circle. He begins 'a story, he is lost in a vacuity of 'thought, and would instantly, to his 'eternal dishonour, become silent, did 'not a series of oaths and imprecations 'give him time to gather up, or rather 'seek the thread of his discourse: he 'begins again, again he is lost; but hav-'ing complimented his friends, by 'calling for eternal damnation on 'them all, he has thought what to say 'next, and finds himself able to pro-'ceed with a sentence or two more. 'Thus he still stalks on, while thought 'follows slowly after. Blessed expedient! 'by the use of which, polite conversa-'tion glides on uninterrupted, while 'sound is happily substituted in the 'place of sense: by this, mankind com-'municate familiar noises to each other, 'with as little intellectual ability and 'labour as a pack of well-matched 'hounds, so often the object of their 'delight and admiration! O how pre-'posterously absurd, then, how false, 'and contrary to experience, is that ri-'diculous assertion, that swearing is at-'tended with neither pleasure nor profit! 'For what higher pleasure, what greater 'profit and advantage can a man enjoy, 'than to find, that, *in spite of nature, 'who has directed him to be silent*, he 'can hear himself talk—talk without 'stammering, or drawing out each hea-'vy sentence, that lags behind, to wait 'on thought! Ye ideots, rejoice! Ye 'coxcombs, whose costive brain ne'er 'dictated the flowing sentiment, be 'glad! Ye, whom learning never fired, 'in stupid ignorance lost, exult! Blest 'with ease and indolence, you talk, and 'those, like you, admire; while listen-'ing demons clap their wings, and grin 'applause!

'Forgive me, Sirs, if, fired with my 'subject, I lose my usual modera-'tion; for who can help being warm-'ed at the motion of such glorious ad-'vantages as these? advantages, which 'level the conversation of the mighty, 'and raise the oratory of the carman 'and porter! Here the lowest frequent-'ly excel; the plowman, with clouted 'shoon, outvies his competitors, and 'practises the vices of the gentleman, 'with more success than the lord of the 'manor, or the splendid courtier, 'though adorned with star and gar-'ter. Here no abilities, no learning, 'are necessary; no studious hours are 'required to attain perfection. Tropes 'and figures, all the flowers of oratory, 'all the pedantry of the schools, are 'vain and useless trumpery, compared 'to these ornaments: they require pains 'and study, nor can be applied without 'judgment, and the toil of reading 'what are foolishly called the ingenious 'and polite authors: but swearing is, 'as I have said, learning to the ignorant, 'eloquence to the blockhead, vivacity 'to the stupid, and wit to the coxcomb.

'Secondly, Oaths and curses are a 'proof of a most heroick courage, at 'least in appearance, which answers 'the same end. For who can doubt 'the valour, the intrepidity, of him 'who braves the thunder of Hea-'ven, who affronts the most formidable 'Being in the universe, and treats with 'contempt that all-enlivening principle 'which sustains and animates the whole 'creation? To what a noble elation is 'the heart of the coward conscious, 'when he thus defies the Almighty, 'and imprecates the fires of hell! Let 'the blustering bully domineer, let him 'roar out his curses, and threaten all 'who dare provoke the vengeance of 'his potent arm; let him terrify by

'a surly

'a surly frown, and intimidate, when 'with portly gait he vents ten thou- 'sand oaths and curses on the wretch 'who impudently presumes to oppose 'his mighty will—who dares doubt his 'courage? Who can believe, that the 'cane, or the toe, when duly ap- 'plied, have such magick power, as to 'make him twist and writhe himself 'like a serpent; till, with this exercise, 'his joints and his mind become so 'supple, that he can bend and cringe, and 'ask pardon? Let the meek soldier boast 'his deeds of war, and with oaths and 'execrations lace the self-flattering tale; 'who can believe that so great a hero 'should have an antipathy to the sight 'of steel? or that he, who challenges 'the blasting lightning to fall on his 'head, would tremble and turn pale at 'the flash of a pistol? No, this must 'never be imagined; for can it be sup- 'posed that he has less bravery in the 'field than in the tavern! With these 'blustering expletives, then, the cow- 'ard may strut and look big, and every 'minute give fresh proofs of an invin- 'cible courage: he may bravely sport 'with that Being, whose frown would 'make the heavens and earth to trem- 'ble; he may seem to snatch the ven- 'geance from his uplifted hand, and 'throw it on his foe; he may invoke the 'wrath of Heaven; and who can ima- 'gine that he is afraid of death, when 'he is continually calling for all the 'horrors of hell?

'Thirdly, He hereby not only gives a 'proof of his courage, but informs the 'world, that he is intirely divested of 'all the foolish prejudices of education, 'and has unlearned

"All that the nurse, and all the priest
"have taught:"

'that he has not only shook off the 'shackles of enthusiasm, but has ba- 'nished from his mind that reverence 'of the Deity, which is the foundation 'of every system of religion. He is not 'suspected of being such a fool as to 'want instruction, since it cannot be 'imagined that he has so dull a taste as 'to go to church, unless, if he be a gen- 'tleman, to ogle the ladies; if a clown, 'to sleep; or, if a tradesman, in com- 'plaisance to the sober old women of 'both sexes, who happen to be his cus- 'tomers: and he has this additional ad- 'vantage, that he will never be taken for 'a pious churchman, a presbyterian, a 'quaker, or a methodist. And, in 'reality, he is so far from being a bi- 'got to any religious principles, that 'he belongs to no religious society upon 'earth. That he is not, nor can be a 'christian, is evident; for what is christ- 'ianity? It is extensive benevolence, 'humanity, and virtue, to which he bids 'defiance with every curse. He cannot 'be a deist, because they openly profess 'the utmost reverence for the Deity; and, 'for the same reason, he can neither be a 'Jew, or a Mahometan, or a follower of 'Confucius. No, nor even an atheist; 'since we cannot conceive, that he would 'so often call upon God, if he was tho- 'roughly convinced there was no such 'Being in the universe: however, he 'every minute lets us see, that he does 'not fear him. How unlicensed is his 'freedom! how glorious and uncon- 'strained! Let the wretches, who meanly 'bend their wills, and regulate their 'actions, by the sage dictates of reason 'and conscience; who stoop to follow 'the rules of religion, and call them sa- 'cred; let these bridle their tongues, 'let these confine themselves within the 'narrow limits prescribed by reason and 'good sense; the swearer knows better; 'sense, and reason, and religion, are all 'subservient to his will; he disdains 'their fetters, and rules those which 'rule all the world beside.

'Fourthly, and lastly, Another advan- 'tage which attends the vice of the gen- 'tleman, this noble accomplishment, is, 'that it sometimes raises him to dignity 'and honour. Under this head, in- 'deed, I take a greater latitude, and 'advert to a remote consequence of the 'practice of swearing: but as there is 'such a close concatenation in all our 'habits, and virtue and vice are pro- 'gressive in their very nature, I should 'not do compleat justice to my sub- 'ject, if I omitted the consideration of 'it in this particular view. When a 'man, therefore, by a happy association 'of ideas, joins to the other advantages 'of this vice ideas of wealth and gran- 'deur; when he sees no argument that 'appears of any weight to bind him 'down to the unthrifty rules of honesty; 'and his regard for his own private ad- 'vantage is too strong to let him have 'any for the private property of his 'neighbour;

'neighbour; what should hinder him, 'when a fair opportunity offers, from 'raising himself, by the ruin of his 'neighbour, his companion, or his 'dearest friend? He has swore to a thou-'sand lyes in company, without any 'view of private advantage; what should 'prevent him, then, from taking one 'false oath, when the advantage is so 'considerable? Surely, neither conscience, nor reason, nor religion, can do 'this: no, that is impossible; for I, 'who am as infallible as any dignified 'priest that ever mounted a pulpit, 'have asserted, that these are all subservient to his will.

'Here the swearer, with an unbounded 'ambition, aspires to seize on wealth, 'and boldly to grasp at those riches 'which fortune has foolishly given to a 'more deserving person; and this in 'spite of Justice and Equity, who are his 'professed enemies. Thus he rises above 'the multitude, and gains a lasting 'fame; not by blood and slaughter, 'but by cunning, deceit and artifice; 'by bursting through the most solemn 'engagements, breaking in sunder the 'bonds of society, and only violating 'what all honest men hold sacred. 'Suppose that he fails in his attempt, 'and the property of the person he has 'attacked remains inviolate: he is conveyed to a castle, strong as that of a 'crowned head; where no impertinent 'intruders dare appear to disturb his 'repose: for in the day-time he has a 'porter to stand at his gate; in the 'night, his faithful attendants lock and 'bar his doors.

'Surrounded with guards, he pays a 'solemn visit at the seat of Justice; he 'has the honour of being admitted to 'the royal bench; he converses with that 'sovereign personage herself, and, for a 'considerable time, takes up the whole 'attention of her prime ministers, the 'lords of her court, who, assiduous to 'pay him all due respect, wait his coming 'in their proper habiliments; and though 'it be ever so early in the day, he is never received with the disrespectful negligence of an undress. The ceremony 'being over, he is re-conducted by the 'same guards who brought him thither, 'and who dare not presume to leave him 'till he is safe within his palace. He now 'soon receives the reward of his baffled 'dexterity, the glorious fruit of his ambition. The day arrives, devoted to 'mirth and jollity, business and care are 'laid aside, and every labouring hand 'has now a holy-day. He walks, or rides 'in his triumphal car, attended by a 'numerous throng of gazing spectators: 'he is mounted above their heads, and 'his neck, not his temples, adorned 'with a civick wreath, and his wrists 'with an embrazure, composed of a 'matter something coarser, indeed, 'than that of pearls and diamonds. 'This is no sooner done, than gaping 'thousands send forth shouts of joy, 'and bending low, even to the ground, 'pay him homage; then rising up, with 'loud acclamations, present their tribute, striving who most shall pay, who 'oftenest bend. He is covered, he is 'loaded, with their gifts, and sensibly 'touched with their bounty. The more 'he gains, the more unenvied here he 'stands; while all rejoice, and give the 'applause that is his due. But, let 'his modesty be ever so great, let his 'blushes be like the trickling drops of 'crimson, painting his bashful cheek, 'and prompting a willingness to retire 'from these honours; yet one hour at 'least he is restrained to stay, to receive 'the willing offerings of the multitude. 'Thrice happy man! had conscience, 'or had reason swayed, thou never 'hadst thus been blest; unknown thou 'mightest have lived, unknown have 'died.

'II. I come now, in the second place, 'to answer some objections; but as these, 'after what has been said, must appear 'extremely trifling, I shall be as concise as possible, and hasten to a conclusion. It is said,

'In the *first* place, that the swearer acts 'in direct opposition to all the rules of 'right reason.

'But how can this be called an objection against swearing? What have 'we to do with right reason?—We 'leave it to the dull wretches, the men 'of reflection: and yet there are some 'of those who attempt to mimick us: 'but if they act inconsistently with their 'own abilities, let them look to that. An 'upright man is a downright fool, if he 'swears at all. Let those who can talk 'without it, extol their wonderous talents; they have no need of this polite 'vice to recommend them to the world. 'The squeamish wretch who is afraid of 'a lye, has no need to swear to what he 'says, for he is certain that his word will

'be readily taken. But away with these 'yea and nay wretches, men born to be 'pointed at; the sheepish, the sober 'fools, who, regardless of the bound-'less liberty we enjoy, talk of rectitude 'of manners, religion, and conscience.

'Secondly, and lastly, it is objected, 'that it is one of the most senseless, un-'natural, rude, and unmannerly vices, 'that ever was invented.

'This, it must be confessed, is paying 'a fine compliment to at least half the 'polite world. How can that be *rude* and *unmannerly* which gives such a grace 'to conversation? 'Tis true, we ex-'press ourselves strongly, and use none 'of those languid, sneaking, epithets in 'our discourse, which your modest men, 'your men of humanity, make use of; 'but, as we talk without meaning, no-'body can say that we mean ill. And, 'indeed, it is a very injurious expres-'sion to say that this is *unnatural*, when 'so many of us have the honour of be-'ing universally deemed to be little bet-'ter than *naturals*.

'And now, Sirs, I have proved so 'effectually the great advantages attend-'ing the practice of this genteel and fa-'shionable vice, that there needs but 'one word by way of application.

'Consider, O consider, how inesti-'mable are the advantages I have men-'tioned! If there is any one here de-'sirous of obtaining these, and yet is 'troubled and intimidated with the im-'pertinence of a restless conscience, fly-'ing in his face, and threatening to 'haunt him like a ghost, let him but 'follow my advice, and conscience will 'fall asleep. Would he steel his heart 'against compunction, let him advance 'by degrees. If he is afraid of an oath, 'let him come as near it as he can; let 'him cry, *Egad*, *ramnation*, and *o'dram ye*; let him thus chip and 'carve a few common-place expressions, 'to fit them them to his conscience, and 'the business will be done. This prac-'tice will render familiar; and the 'coward, who first trembled at the 'thought of hell, will soon have the cou-'rage to call for damnation.

'And now, ye who have long in-'dulged this vice, who have arrived at 'perfection in this great accomplish-'ment, and, by this means, have gained 'that applause which nature would have 'denied you, which reason refused, and 'conscience condemned; you, I say, 'who, by the assistance of this vice, 'have distinguished yourselves, either 'as the orator, the pimp, or the bully; 'you who, with more distinguished 'glory, have graced the lofty pillory; 'and you who, under specious oaths of 'speedy marriage, have violated virgin 'innocence, and rewarded the maid 'that loved you with eternal infamy; 'consider these noble advantages, ap-'plaud, congratulate yourselves, and 'rejoice! You have not stopped at the 'most flagrant impieties; you have 'challenged and defied the blasting 'power of Heaven to do it's worst; and, 'with a disinterestedness peculiar to 'yourselves, have generously sold the 'reversion of eternal, inexhaustible hap-'piness, merely for the pleasure of af-'fronting that great beneficent Being 'who has prepared it for you, your in-'dulgent Creator and Almighty Friend! 'How nobly ungrateful! how unselfish 'your conduct! Boast your bravery, 'and consider the wisdom of the ex-'change: for how blind must you be to 'every self-interested view, how deaf to 'the calls of self-love, while infinite 'unbounded felicity has no charms, 'when standing in competition with the 'delight of affronting a benefactor, 'with the pleasure of a curse, and the 'satisfaction of hearing your own im-'pertinence! STUPIDITY, IGNO-'RANCE, and FOLLY, are on your 'side: act, therefore, like men who 'profess to be their friends, and like the 'true enemies of REASON, RELIGION, 'VIRTUE, and COMMON SENSE. 'You have seen your practice justified 'with advantages which you have ne-'ver before thought of; if these have 'any weight, if these have any charms, 'let them have all their influence. To 'sum up all, let every man act consist-'ently with his real character; and, by 'his indulgence of this practice, or his 'forbearance, let his abilities, or his 'follies, stand confessed.'

You have now, I suppose, read this extraordinary performance: but the strik-ing action, the natural expression varied into different tones, the sneering air in which he uttered some sentences, and the thundering pompous manner in which he pronounced those bordering on the bombast, you can form no idea of; these are still behind, and not to be expressed, even though I should endeavour to fol-

low

low the example of that memorable preacher, who inserted in the margin of his printed sermon the proper places where to cough, and where to blow his nose. Lucius had carefully studied these particulars; which, however trifling they may appear, are essential parts of oratory. These surpassed all description; they gave life and energy to the discourse: every sentence was animated with a degree of fire peculiar to itself, which at once warmed our minds and spread abroad the light of conviction.

Lucius had no sooner concluded this long harangue, than the stranger appeared most forward to thank him; and not only acknowledged the satire just, but very honestly confessed that he felt the force of every word, that he was shocked at a practice he had too much indulged, and resolved never more to be guilty of it. My cousin said, he believed Lucius was run mad, and that he could not understand half of it. The clergyman, though he liked it very well in the main, thought it bordered a little on the profane: but Mr. Stevens was very warm in it's defence; as was my aunt, Mellifont, and Amelia; though the latter objected to the puns and play upon the words; which Lucius vindicated, as agreeable to the ridiculous character he was sometimes obliged to assume, and as most likely to strike the attention of those persons he had in view, who are commonly pleased with mere sounds, and but little influenced by arguments that require reflection.

I am so used to write long letters to you, that I hardly know how to send you a short one. It is a week since I began this; it is therefore time to conclude, and to assure you, that I am, very sincerely, your ladyship's constant friend,

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XL.

DEAR MADAM,

WHEN I concluded my last, I had several things to add, which I think worthy of notice; and therefore, without any farther preface, I shall continue the subject.

The person whom I have hitherto distinguished by the name of my cousin's fellow-traveller, and whose real name is Smith, now expressed an extraordinary esteem for Lucius, which did not seem to fall very short of the most cordial friendship. His confidence and assurance, which was before the source of great impertinence, was, at this time, (permit, Madam, the expression) melted down by a kind of deference and shame, arising from a sense of folly, and a consciousness of superior worth, into a modest manly diffidence, which served to check the first impulses to an idle gaiety, and cured him, at least in our company, of that forward, talkative temper, which had before rendered his conversation very disgustful. His ingenuity in confessing his crime prepossessed us in his favour; and we soon found him a sensible companion, in spite of that thoughtfulness that now threw a cloud over his natural vivacity; a thoughtfulness that seemed to derive it's source from a sense of inward guilt, and the secret reproaches of his own mind. My aunt made him a very handsome compliment on that open frankness of heart which had made him dare to confess that he had been in an error; but she could not do this without a sigh, and giving an affectionate look at her son. Lucius let us know that she had spoke his sentiments, and he was now regarded as a person worthy of being admitted to a nearer and more intimate acquaintance. Mr. Smith, though very much taken up with his own thoughts, seemed extremely assiduous to please, and to render himself agreeable to every person in the company, but more especially so to Lucius. He observed the respect, the friendship, the sweet complacency, that subsisted between Mellifont, Mr. Stevens, and us; he instantly regarded these two gentlemen as his friends, and addressed them in a manner very different to his former behaviour. He observed the regard we expressed for the worthy clergyman; he now, therefore, treated him with respect. My cousin seemed to have lost his friend; and having nobody to strike out his feeble spark of fire, and to give him an opportunity to display his talents, sat silent, with a most forlorn and disconsolate countenance, his eyes fixed on Mr. Smith, and a visible uneasiness at seeing him engross so much of the conversation, and in such a manner, too, as rendered it impossible for him to have any share in it. He was, therefore, out of his element: he was jealous of the superior respect shewn to his friend; he was confounded, disappointed in all his high-raised hopes of future pleasure,

and yet knew not how to complain. In short, he appeared like the figure of moping Melancholy, seated on a tomb. What a surprizing metamorphosis!

The rest of the day was spent with great satisfaction; for though the subjects of discourse were extremely grave, yet our minds partook of that sober, solemn kind of entertainment, which, while we enjoy it, is attended with more delight than the frolick laugh of mirth, and which has the power of accompanying, with a serene satisfaction, the most distant reflections: and indeed, so exquisitely sweet were these calmly-pleasing and self-approving sensations, and so intent were they all on the subjects of conversation, that they did not depart till late in the evening, and even then it was with a visible reluctance.

They had all prepared to go, when Mr. Smith, taking Lucius and me aside, said, with an affectionate tone of voice—'I hope you will both forgive my impertinent behaviour at my first visit; and I 'am the more solicitous about this, as 'I have the ambition of being ranked 'among the number of your friends. 'Can you, Sir, can you, Madam, excuse my folly? I am thoroughly sensible of it in every particular, and am 'as heartily ashamed of it; I wish your 'cousin was so too. As for me, I am 'going to lament in private. My boasted 'travels, the subject of my former vanity, have been the source of a thousand extravagancies; instead of improving, they have only served to debauch my mind: but these are no sooner 'finished, than I meet with a person who 'sets them before me in the truest light. 'The contrast between you and me has 'been too glaring not to be observed. 'What a wretch do I think myself! 'But I must no sooner know than leave 'you. I leave you with reluctance, 'and it is very probable that I shall never see you again.' Lucius replied, by giving him the most frank and engaging assurances of his friendship; and two days after he set forward on his journey. But it is time to return to ourselves.

Prudilla, Madam, has now breathed her last; but, notwithstanding her former terror and agitation of mind, her last minutes were perfectly composed; and, as nature was quite spent, she left the world without those struggles, and convulsive agonies, which render that awful moment so terrible with persons of stronger spirits.

We have been several times to my father's to see the child, and both my mother and my sister Marilla seem perfectly fond of it. It is really an engaging little creature, and I think it impossible for me to help loving it. My duty, in this case, is extremely easy, since it is attended with all the pleasure of following my own inclinations, joined to the additional satisfaction it gives to Lucius.

An affair has happened which gives me great uneasiness, the particulars of which I shall acquaint you with in my next. I am your ever affectionate

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XLI.

DEAR MADAM,

I Am now to relate to you the cause of that uneasiness I mentioned in my last; for as you have hitherto been the confident of all my little affairs, I have contracted such a habit of laying my thoughts before you, that I really believe I should find no small difficulty in concealing from you any circumstance in which I have an immediate concern. How great is the force of custom! No sooner does any thing the least extraordinary happen, but I consider it as contributing to your amusement; and frequently sit down to acquaint you with my affairs, even before I have sufficiently reflected whether they are of importance enough to deserve your notice; so that whether you are diverted with my story, or disgusted with my impertinence, depends entirely upon chance.

Some time ago, I took a servant on the recommendation of a poor, though honest, old woman in the neighbourhood; but I needed not the character she gave me to prepossess me in her favour. The innocent and artless modesty of her looks, and the easy unconstrained freedom of her behaviour, were the first things that I took notice of, and which really inspired me with a favourable opinion of her virtue and discretion: but this opinion was soon heightened by the sweetness of her temper, and a certain languor in her looks. I hardly ever found her alone, but I observed her in tears: from hence I began to pity her; and,

and, by degrees, this pity arose to a kind of friendship. I therefore made her service as easy to her as possible; and from being at first my chamber-maid, raised her to be my woman. As her constitution was very delicate, this was a station that I thought she had the greatest reason to be satisfied with; but though she expressed the highest sense of gratitude, yet I could discover no alteration in her disposition. Being still desirous to contribute to her satisfaction, I endeavoured, by all the ways I could think of, to discover the cause of her uneasiness; but she evaded all my enquiries with so much politeness and good sense, that I resolved, at length, to put a stop to my curiosity, till time should wear off her reserve, or some accident, without her consent, inform me of her affairs.

Your ladyship is, perhaps, offended at my offering to entertain you with the trifling affairs of my servants, in which you are ready to imagine there can be nothing of importance enough to engage my concern: but have patience; I don't doubt but I shall soon obtain your approbation with regard to this particular.

I had been called away in the middle of my last letter to you, and was returning to my chamber to finish it; when recollecting that I should want to use a stick of sealing-wax, which I had the day before given to my favourite Dorothea, who, at her own request, was gone to Nottingham, I stepped into her room to look for it. But how great was my surprize, when I beheld upon her table a gold snuff-box finely chased! What could I think! I called Lucius; he came; and, at first, suggested every argument he could think of to remove my suspicions: but comparing the possession of so valuable a box with Dorothea's circumstances, and the manner in which she was recommended to me, he was induced to confirm the opinion I had conceived of her dishonesty. We both concluded that I had caressed an artful, abandoned wretch; upon which a number of circumstances presently rose in our minds that strengthened this heavy charge. Her box was instantly broke open; when, among other things, we found a crucifix set with diamonds, and a chaplet of pearls, and a mass-book in Latin and English. Lucius was enraged, and insisted that she ought to suffer the penalty of the law; and that he could neither excuse it to himself, nor to his country, to screen her from justice; since, in that case, he should be answerable for the next robbery she committed. We both blessed the discovery we had made; and did not at all question but she waited for an opportunity to let in a gang of thieves, in the night, to rob, and, perhaps, murder us in our sleep: and what confirmed this suspicion was, our presently hearing from the servants, that she had several times been seen to give silver to some shabby, ill-looking fellows, who, under pretence of begging, frequently came to the door. Thus prejudice, Madam, when once raised, is a medium that changes the colour of objects, and shapes them to our fancy. Our fears being awaked, imagination is set to work to invent new scenes of ideal horror. We then deal in nothing but the gloomy and the dismal; we start at the rovings of our distempered minds; new dangers arise at every thought; we catch at every cause of discontent; and, anxious to swell the inward perturbation, search only for fresh grounds of uneasiness. No wonder that the object, that raises these horrid sensations, grows every moment more deformed. While we view only the shades of the direful character, we conclude the whole to be dark and odious; virtue becomes affectation, beauty a mask, and every perfection hypocrisy, put on only to conceal some deadly purpose. Thus, by a kind of contrast, deformity itself becomes more deformed. From hence we precipitately concluded, that, as we had reason to believe her a thief, she was a murderer too, and regarded ourselves as victims to be sacrificed to her avarice. How frightful the thought! Old Mr. Trueman was called to give us his opinion; when he advised us to send to the next justice for a warrant, to procure a constable, and to search the poor woman's house who had recommended her.

The warrant was soon procured; when Lucius and I, with the good old man, attended the constable, to see if we could find any thing there belonging to us. The old woman was terrified to the last degree. She was surrounded with many conveniences, which, a short time before, she was known to want; and seemed raised, in some degree, to a comfortable independence. From whence could this arise, but from her being a necessary instrument in Dorothea's crimes? This was the inference we drew from it. Mr. Trueman

Trueman therefore secured her, and let her know that she must not leave the house: but she appeared more concerned for her friend than herself; she would not hear of her being a thief; she ran on in her praises. At last, a tea-chest was found, and she readily acknowledged it was Dorothea's, and that she had the key. It was therefore broke open; when we found in it upwards of fifty guineas, some broad pieces, several very fine rings, and a gold watch wrapped up in cotton to prevent it's being damaged. But what struck me most, was a pair of diamond ear-rings: these I was persuaded I knew again; I was convinced that they were the same which my father gave me to keep in remembrance of my dear mamma, and which he had presented to her before their marriage. What could I say? I would not have lost them for ten times their real value. Had I not reason to be enraged? To rob me of what she knew I deemed invaluable, of what I prized on my dear mother's account; me, who had given her my esteem and my friendship; me, who had raised her from nothing, who had caressed her, who had loaded her with obligations, and advanced her almost to the character of my companion: how ungrateful! And yet this robbery was, in all probability, only a prelude to the mischief she was to bring upon us.

These, Madam, were my reflections, and thus I vented aloud my resentment; while the poor woman, terrified almost to death, cried, and, with many sighs and tears, lamented the ruin of a girl who had been so kind a benefactress; intermixing loud and violent protestations of her own innocence.

After the search was finished, the constable was ordered to keep the woman a prisoner, in her own house, till Dorothea's return; when he was to take them together before the magistrate who had granted the warrant. Mean while we went home; and I, with a sorrowful, aching heart, retired with Lucius to talk over the affair, and to wait the return of Dorothea. Almost every servant in the house shewed their envy, by putting the most invidious construction upon her actions; and, had I been disposed to listen to them, I verily believe they would never have ceased their invectives. All the mischief that had been done in the house would have been, by some one or other, laid at her door; and she was, indeed, charged with faults of which I knew her entirely innocent.

We had waited about an hour for her return; when my chambermaid told me that she was come home, that they had charged her with the fact, and that her very look condemned her. Lucius gave immediate orders to have her taken to the poor woman's, and that the constable should carry them both before the justice; adding, that he would follow them immediately. This news was no sooner carried down, than we heard an extraordinary bustle; and, upon ringing the bell to know what was the matter, a servant came to inform us that she had the impudence to dispute their master's command, and refused to go till she had seen me. I then gave orders that she should be brought up. But I had hardly spoke the word, when she burst open the door, and ran into the room, attended by the cook-maid, and another or two of the lower servants, who stopped at the door. She came up to me as if for protection, and stood trembling, pale, and out of breath: in short, she had lost her cap; her hair was in the utmost disorder, and her cloaths almost torn from her back. What an affecting sight! Lucius seemed shocked, and demanded what was the reason of their treating her in this manner, with a tone of voice that sufficiently expressed his disapprobation. They laid the fault on her, who would not let them take her away civilly; when Lucius observing that they had no right to use violence without his leave, and ordered them sternly to withdraw, our thoughts were turned upon the single object, that with a look of terror stood panting before us. Indeed, Madam, my heart relented. Struck with a figure so moving, I could scarcely refrain from tears; but the next moment, recollecting that she was a thief, a vile hypocrite, who had abused my good nature, indignation again usurped the place of pity.

After a short silence, Lucius, with a stern voice began—'Thou wicked, 'unhappy wretch,' said he, 'don't attempt to excuse and palliate your 'crimes; but, by an open confession, discover whom you have robbed, what were 'your intentions, and who are your accomplices.

'complices. This, I assure you, will 'be the only way to obtain mercy; for, 'upon these considerations, I now pro-'mise to make use of all my influence 'in your favour.'—'O Sir! O Ma-'dam!' cried she, interrupting him with an assured air; 'for God's sake, 'hear me. You know not who I am. 'If I do not convince you that I am 'injured, extremely injured, let me suf-'fer all that the law can inflict. Let me 'tell you, Sir, that I neither ask nor 'desire mercy. The innocent have no 'need of mercy.'—'Take care, take 'care of what you say,' replied Lucius. 'I would give a great deal to find you 'innocent; but such strong circum-'stances——' 'I wish, with all my 'heart,' said I, 'that you could prove 'your innocence; but I am afraid that 'is impossible. Such convincing proofs! '—And my ear-rings, too!—' 'What 'ear-rings, Madam?' returned she, without a blush: 'you will not, surely, 'say that I have stole your ear-rings?'—'Yes,' said Lucius; 'they were found 'in a tea-chest that belongs to you, and 'I have them here to produce before the 'magistrate.'

It was observable, that the terror which at first had all the symptoms of guilt, wore off every moment; and, indeed, fear and affright impress upon the countenance of the most innocent marks which may be easily mistaken for indications of the conscious wickedness of an abandoned mind. How absurd, then, is it for people to pretend to form a judgment from such equivocal appearances! She now very calmly desired to see the ear-rings. Lucius took them out of a piece of paper, and gave them into her hand; when, instead of the confusion which I expected to find in her countenance, she replied—'So I 'find I am condemned for stealing what 'is my own.'—'Yours!' said I, amazed; 'you will not, surely, say that these ear-'rings are yours! How could you 'come by them? Besides, I dare say 'they are mine: why, girl, I could 'swear it.'—'Hold, hold, Madam,' said she. 'Are yours lost, then? Are 'they not in your dressing-box?'—'I 'have not so much as looked,' I replied; 'however, to convince you, I will look 'now, though I am persuaded it will be 'to no purpose: I know them too well 'to be mistaken.' Here I went for my dressing-box; and bringing it, with much difficulty, under my arm, opened it before her; when, to my entire confusion, the first thing I set my eyes on was the very ear-rings I had laid to her charge. I blushed; and was so struck with the sight, that I had not the power to speak a word. Lucius, therefore, resumed. 'Well, Dorothea,' said he, 'your in-'nocence, in this particular, is suffi-'ciently recommended; how glad should 'we be, if it was possible for you to 'clear yourself of the rest! But how 'you could come by them, I cannot 'imagine; I am afraid not honestly. I 'should rejoice to find that we have 'injured you; and would, in that case, 'make you all possible satisfaction. But 'first put yourself in a little order—'your cap, Dorothea—your cap. But, 'admitting you innocent, which I must 'tell you I much doubt of, a glass of 'wine may be necessary to raise your 'spirits.' She now looked in the glass, and blushing, began in a hurry to streak and tie up her long dishevelled locks with all the eager concern of a mind that had no other object in view but a regard for decency; telling me, at the same time, that the conscicusness that she could clear herself whenever she pleased, was a better support to her spirits than all the wine in the world. Her cap, which, being fastened to her hair, hung low down her back, was presently put on; and, by the confusion in her looks, and the readiness with which she dressed her head, pinned up the rents in her gown, and reduced herself into a more becoming figure, let us see that nothing but such an extraordinary perturbation of mind as that she was in when she ran into the room, could have made her so long inattentive to the decorums of her sex. When she had finished this task, she began—

'I am now to appear in a very different 'character from that in which you have 'hitherto known me. I am obliged to 'throw off the disguise of a servant, and 'to reveal a secret which I would gladly 'have kept within my own breast, at 'least for some time longer. Your su-'spicions, I perceive, arise from your 'finding a few things of value in the 'possession of a servant; one whom you 'took into your house under the ap-'pearance of indigence and low birth. 'In order, then, to be restored to your 'favour, I have nothing more to do but 'to convince you that I am born of a

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'very honourable family, and that I 'may reasonably expect a fortune sufficient to entitle me to wear these objects of your suspicion. My father, 'who is now living, is a baronet, and 'enjoys a very plentiful estate in Lincolnshire; he was married to a lady 'of the Romish religion, and a mutual 'agreement was made to prevent any future uneasiness with regard to the 'education of their children. According to this agreement, my brother was 'educated a Protestant, while I was 'brought up by my mother in her own 'principles; but she dying about three 'years ago, I soon, too soon, felt the 'effects of her loss. She was scarcely 'buried, when my religious liberties 'were invaded; my father confessor was 'forbid to come near me; I was continually importuned with the solicitations of ministers whom my religion 'made it criminal for me to hear; my 'disregard of their instructions was resented as the highest act of disobedience. And thus, by performing what 'I thought my duty, I incurred a father's displeasure. If I stopped my 'ears to the arguments that were offered 'me, it was said that I resolved to be 'deaf to the voice of truth. They gave 'me a Bible—I durst not read it; they 'would read it to me, but it was unlawful for me to hear them, and, 'therefore, I would not suffer them to 'do it: this was construed into obstinacy. I durst not be so vain as to 'consult my own shallow reason, when 'I did not know but it might contradict the infallible doctrines of our holy 'church. I was now treated with extreme severity; but, at last, wearied out 'by my father's and my brother's importunities, I resolved to appear more 'tractable, and even went so far as sometimes to suffer myself to be conducted to 'the parish church, and to pretend at least 'that I was almost convinced: but this 'piece of hypocrisy was soon punished; 'it reached my director's ears; when, 'prompted by a zeal for my salvation, 'he, in my father's absence, got admission into the house, and gave me 'a very severe lecture on the insincerity of my conduct; exhorted me to be 'stedfast, and confirmed me by abundance of pious arguments: but before 'he had done, my father, who had been 'sent for by somebody that saw him in 'the house, and who had overheard 'great part of his discourse, entered 'the room in a violent passion, threatened to send the good man to jail, 'and actually kicked him down stairs.

'I was now treated with more severity than ever, was locked up in my 'room, and never permitted to see any 'company but such as were most disagreeable. A gentleman was introduced to me, and I was forced to receive his addresses: he was a zealous 'church-man, and so assiduous to please 'my father, that, in his presence, he 'seldom spoke of any thing but religion; and thus paying his court to 'him, instead of me, made him not more 'his friend than he made me his enemy. A day was appointed for my 'being married to the man in the world 'I had the greatest aversion to. What 'could I do? my prayers and intreaties 'were all to no purpose. I was drove 'to the last extremity, and had no other 'resource but flight. I therefore, one 'moon-light night, when all were in 'bed, disguised myself, and taking some 'of my mother's, and my own jewels, 'with the little money I had, putting 'it all, except five guineas, in a tea-chest, 'made my escape out of the house, by 'dropping out of the window, which 'was only one story high, and fled to 'the priest; but he not daring to conceal me, procured me a horse, and the 'same night I set out, hardly knowing 'where I went, and the next day reached this place before noon; when being 'very weary, I found a poor woman, 'to whom I told as much of my story 'as I thought necessary to raise her 'compassion: to her I gave the horse, 'which I had before paid for; and, by 'her recommendation, I had the favour 'of being admitted into your house as 'a servant.'

Our surprize, Madam, exceeded all description; we let her go on without interruption, merely for want of words proper to form our excuses. For my part, a number of circumstances, as she proceeded, arose in my mind, that confirmed every word she spoke, with the force of the most convincing evidence; the genteel air of her dress, her polite unconstrained behaviour on all occasions, joined to an extensive knowledge of the works of many of the most polite authors. I recollected that I had once heard her repeat a few lines from Tasso, and I had some reason to believe that

she was a perfect mistress both of the French and Italian languages. She is a Papist. Her excuses for not joining in the family devotion, the frivolous pretences with which she always avoided reading to me any piece of religion—It was certainly so—she must be a Papist. I thought both Lucius and myself perfect fools for not seeing through, and knowing her in this disguise, a disguise too thin to hide her character from the least discerning eye. I looked at her person; I was struck at the disorder of her dress—frightful disorder! could I see it without redoubled confusion? I reflected on the indignities she had suffered; brutal indignities! A lady of fortune and distinction, my superior—what savage treatment! how much she was injured! What a bustle had we been making about nothing, only to shew our ignorance and hasty passion! Lucius was justly confounded, and hung down his head. She was still standing. 'Pray, Madam, be seated,' said I. She obeyed, and took a chair; and while we were meditating an apology for our preposterous behaviour, she resumed—

'I know, Madam, that I pay my 'court to a Protestant with a very ill 'grace, when I attempt to do it by con'fessing myself a Catholick; but I 'know, however, that you will vindi'cate me from a crime which you have 'unjustly laid to my charge. I can, in 'this case, give such additional testimo'nies of my innocence, as to strike ma'lice itself dumb. Much more shall 'I convince you, of whose goodness 'and humanity I have received a 'number of such pleasing instances as 'I never shall forget. Yet, as I am a 'Roman, you will probably join with 'my father, and while you preach to 'me of persecution and prejudice, suf'ficiently shew, like him, that you are 'capable of both. But do not Sir—O 'do not, Madam, abuse the confidence 'I have reposed in you. Don't give 'me up to the resentment of my rela'tions.'—'No, Madam,' cried Lucius, 'I will intermeddle in your af'fairs no farther than you are pleased 'to approve. But what apology shall 'I make? How shall I excuse our con'duct? You have been used so ill, that 'it is a kind of folly to ask your par'don. Indeed I am ashamed, and per'fectly sorry for my behaviour; and 'what recompence is in our power to 'make you, freely demand it.'—'I 'thank you, Sir,' returned she, smiling; 'there is really no reason at all for these 'apologies. I cannot help saying, 'that appearances were against me; and 'while you thought me what I seemed, 'you ought to have done what you did.' —'This is very generous, Madam,' said I; 'and the only return we can 'make, is to interest ourselves in your 'happiness.'—'I thank you both,' said she: 'but will you not then take part 'with my father? Do you promise to 'leave me, whilst I stay with you, to the 'free enjoyment of the only true reli'gion?'—'Yes, Madam,' Lucius replied, 'I promise it to you very sin'cerely. I am an enemy to persecution, 'and to every attempt to force the con'science, however misinformed. A true 'Protestant, from principle, hates all 'religious tyranny. He is, by profes'sion, the friend of liberty, and ought 'therefore to check every unjust sally 'that would lead him to violate it on 'the meanest object. We allow of 'no inquisition. The man who is a 'bigot, and yet disclaims infallibility, 'is a contradiction to himself; a con'tradiction as great as any we can lay 'to your charge. We, believe me, 'Madam, deal not in contradictions; 'ours is the religion of common sense; 'we ask not a blind obedience; nor do 'we attempt, by shutting the Bible, and 'laying the understanding in fetters, to 'close the eyes and the ears to the voice 'of God. I therefore blame your 'father, and resolve to make use of all 'my power to restore you to a perfect 'liberty; to awaken his affection, and, 'consequently, to give you a proper 'share in his fortune; and to do this 'only in concert with you. Mean 'while, make use of this house as your 'own.'—'I sincerely thank you,' said she, 'and shall readily embrace your 'offer. To be restored to my father's 'affection is, indeed, a blessing equal to 'my highest ambition. To be restored 'to this, without wounding my consci'ence!—I should have nothing more 'to wish for. O my heart! how it longs 'for the tender union! But the flat'tering hope is vain, vain indeed! 'How shall I see him! With what 'indignation will he look upon his 'daughter, a fugitive, an alien, a

'wretch, in his opinion, deserving his 'utmost hatred! Methinks I see him 'stand before me, and with a stern and 'steady look, reproach and upbraid 'me for the uneasiness I have given 'him. Ah, Madam!' added she, 'you 'have often found me in tears: you can 'now no longer wonder at the cause! I 'fear I must still be unhappy—perhaps 'not: however, I will hope the best.' Here she endeavoured to compose her looks; and wiping her eyes, which began to swim with tears, she resumed—'Well, I will indulge the pleasing re'flection of embracing him, who was 'once the tenderest, most kind, and 'obliging parent. As to my fortune, 'that is already secure by the marriage 'settlement: as the daughters were to 'be educated in my mother's principles, 'they were to possess her jointure; and, 'as I am the only daughter, it must all 'devolve to me, after my father's de'cease. How happy will your friend'ship be to me! How richly shall I be 'repaid for the short uneasiness you have 'given me, if, by your means, I can 'live with peace and pleasure in my 'father's house!'

I now thought it high time to let her see that I had the same sentiments as Lucius. I gave her very affectionate testimonies of my friendship, mingled with apologies for the severity of my treatment. I insisted that she should make use of my cloaths, and dress more suitably to her birth and fortune. Lucius took this opportunity to send to the constable, and to desire him to leave our old neighbour at liberty; and, after making him a small present for his trouble, and the poor woman a considerable one, as a recompence for the uneasiness we had given her, they both seemed perfectly satisfied.

We presently found that the servants, who had treated the young lady so ill, in a character more upon a level with theirs, had acted only from pride. They were all greatly offended at her not entering into their little cabals: they imagined that she thought herself above them; and, as she was preferred before them by me, they suspected that I encouraged her self-conceit, and, on this account, she was both envied and hated; they therefore rejoiced to see her pulled down, and contributed all they could to press her still lower. But, now she was placed in a more exalted view, and no proper subject for their envy, there was a total change in their dispositions: her company, whenever it had been granted them, was an honour that, in the reflection, tickled their vanity; she had conferred a sort of dignity on their station, and was the kindest, most obliging lady; and so humble, that she seemed rather to be born a servant like them, than a baronet's daughter. What fine things are birth and fortune! Happy accomplishments! that can thus change our actions, even in those minute circumstances, that are altogether indifferent!—But let me stop the current of my reflections.

Twenty times, I believe, I have been obliged to break off, and as often have I resumed my subject. I am now very much indisposed; and shall therefore take this opportunity to conclude, and to assure your ladyship, that I am, and ever shall be, your faithful friend,

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XLII.

I Can now, Madam, give you the conclusion of Dorothea's story. One morning, about a week after that day of uneasiness and unjust suspicions, which I described in my last, the young lady came into my room, just at the time I was dressing, and insisted, with a good deal of gaiety, on performing her usual task; which, however I refused: but she staid till the servant, who had taken her office, was gone; when sitting down by me—'Dear Madam,' said she, 'did 'not you observe, that I avoided com'ing before Mr. Smith, the gentleman 'who was your cousin's companion in 'his travels? I really knew him at first 'sight. My father has a seat in York'shire, not far distant from his father's. 'As the two old gentlemen are intimate 'friends, my brother and young Mr. 'Smith, whenever we chose to reside in 'that part of the country, were con'stant companions. His father fre'quently brought him to our house; so 'that, though his person is conside'rably altered, it was impossible for 'me not to know him. All my fear 'was, lest he should discover me under 'the disguise I had assumed. When 'he was here, I wished him a hundred 'times out of the house; and, while

'you

'you were in the room with him, I was 'more than once put to a terrible 'ſtreight, by your ſending for me to 'bring in ſomething you wanted. I 'dreaded to ſee him, almoſt as much as 'I ſhould have done my father. And, 'indeed, it appeared to me the ſame 'thing; for, if he had diſcovered me, he 'would certainly have made no ſecret 'of the place and ſituation in which he 'found me. He was never here but I 'was in the greateſt uneaſineſs; and all 'the while he ſtaid, I felt the moſt ter-'rible palpitation of heart.'

'Now I recollect the circumſtance, 'Madam,' ſaid I, 'I could not help 'taking notice of the many excuſes you 'made to avoid coming into the room; 'and I thought there was ſome myſtery 'in your behaviour, which I could not 'comprehend. But I cannot help ob-'ſerving, that had I been ſo unfortu-'nate as to have thought of this yeſter-'day, I ſhould have conſtrued it great-'ly to your diſadvantage; and fooliſhly 'imagined, that it proceeded from a 'conſcious guilt, and, perhaps, a fear 'of being diſcovered by a perſon of 'the very family you had robbed of ſuch 'valuable effects. How blind are we! 'how eaſily hurried away by appear-'ances! and how careful ought we to 'be in forming a judgment of others! 'I am now glad, heartily glad, that I 'did not, by recollecting this circum-'ſtance, encreaſe my own uneaſineſs, 'and your ill treatment. I never was 'ſo thoroughly convinced, as I am at pre-'ſent, that even forgetfulneſs, amongſt 'our other imperfections, has it's ad-'vantages. May I learn from this to 'be ever cautious of cenſure, and afraid 'of judging the actions of another! 'But pray, Madam, proceed.'

'When Mr. Smith firſt came in with 'your couſin,' continued ſhe, 'I was 'ſo happy as not to be obſerved; there-'fore, the moment I ſaw him, and heard 'his voice, I hurried out of the room, 'and afterwards took all imaginable 'precaution to avoid his ſeeing me. The 'laſt time he was here, I heard him in 'the hall; he was taking his leave: you 'were with him, and called me—I 'trembled, but, ſoon recovering myſelf, 'ſlipped out of the back-door unnoticed; 'when having taken a turn or two in 'the garden, I reſolved to go into the 'wood, imagining that I might there, 'without danger of diſcovery, watch 'the moment of his departure; but the 'trees prevented me. I then attempted 'to croſs the avenue, at ſome diſtance 'from the houſe; and ſetting off very 'ſwiftly, ran againſt him with all my 'force. I ſtaggered backwards; and 'recovering myſelf juſt as he turned 'about, he looked full in my face. I 'was ſtruck with confuſion. "Miſs "Dorothea!" he cried; and, in a 'moment, as if recollecting himſelf, I 'heard him add, as I flew before him to 'the other ſide, "I muſt be deceived! "it can never be Dorothea!" I could 'hear no more. I fancied he followed 'me. Methought I heard the leaves 'ruſtle behind me. I did not ſtop till 'I was out of breath. My mind was 'agitated with my fears. The method 'I had taken to prevent a diſcovery, 'proved the very means of making my-'ſelf known. I ſtood ſtill!—I liſtened. 'All was quiet. I reflected on what had 'paſſed; when changing my purpoſe, I 'reſolved to ſtep back, to call him aſide 'from your couſin, and, by an ingenu-'ous confeſſion of the whole affair, to 'prevail upon him to keep my retreat a 'ſecret from my father: but in this flut-'ter of ſpirits, ſo long was I in form-'ing my reſolution, and ſo many 'thoughts occurred both for and againſt 'my putting it in practice, that when 'I returned to the place, Mr. Smith 'and your couſin were almoſt out of 'ſight. Strange caprice of the mind! 'Notwithſtanding the affright and eager 'haſte with which I ran from him; 'ſlowly as I had moved to find him, 'and in ſpite of all the reluctance I felt 'in forcing myſelf to take this ſtep, I 'now looked upon his being gone as 'the greateſt misfortune. I burſt into 'tears, and——'

She was here interrupted by Lucius, who, coming into the room, told me that Mr. Smith was already returned, in company with an elderly gentleman, to pay us the viſit he had promiſed at parting; and deſiring that I would make haſte to receive them, retired.

Poor Dorothea, who had revived every uneaſy thought by the confidence ſhe had been placing in me while thus unburthening her mind, was now, to all appearance, in a very unhappy ſituation. Her eyes were moiſtened with tears; when Lucius appeared, and gave a ſhock to her mind, by letting her know that this formidable Mr. Smith was

returned, with a gentleman, whom she immediately concluded to be her father, the person she dreaded most to see. Lucius was no sooner gone, than I beheld her sunk back in her chair; her eyes were half-closed, and her countenance expressive of the most lively distress. Struck with surprize, I ran to her relief, and endeavoured to rouze her from this situation, by assuring her that, if she pleased, she should not see Mr. Smith; but she interrupted me, by crying—'O my 'father!—my father is in the house!' I tried every method to comfort her; and, at last, after giving her the strongest assurances that I would use every argument to excuse and justify her, she began to moderate her uneasiness.

I then left her, full of the thoughts of vindicating her to the utmost of my power; when, as I went through the passage, I found that she was not mistaken in her conjectures; for, before I entered the room, I heard a voice cry—'Believe me, Sir, I know enough of 'them, and their priests too; and, damn 'her, if she had as much regard for her 'own salvation as I have for her—' Here I opened the door, and, by the entrance, cut short this fine expression of his pious concern for the future welfare of his daughter. They rose up, and, after the usual compliments, resumed their seats; when Mr. Smith, giving me much the same account of his meeting with Dorothea that she herself had just before done, let us know that the improbability of it's being really that lady, in such a dress, and so far from home, made him imagine that he must have been mistaken; but the circumstance was so remarkable, that, when he arrived at his father's, he could no more help mentioning it to him, than he could the pleasure he had received from the conversation of a gentleman that I was very well acquainted with, and whom he was proud to call his friend. Lucius and I smiled at this compliment; but as neither of us interrupted him, he proceeded to inform us, that his father, after asking him abundance of questions about her, to which he could give no satisfactory answer, at last told him, that she had left her father's house, and had been missing near six months, and that he could do no less than communicate what he heard to the person most concerned to know the place of her retirement. A letter was accordingly sent to Dorothea's father, who came to learn the particulars from the young gentleman himself; and he being desirous to see Mr. Manly again, proposed to conduct him to us. He concluded with letting us know, that he was very glad she had been so wise as to chuse so honourable a retreat.

While we were at breakfast, the stranger gave us an account of his marriage with Dorothea's mother; related many family broils that happened on the score of religion and politicks; complained of the disturbance he had met with from priests; that they had spoiled the best woman in the world, and robbed him of his daughter, by persuading the saucy baggage to run away from him. From thence he digressed to popish tyranny, to massacres, and the tortures of inquisitions; talked in favour of charity with the rage of a bigot; reproached the papists for the want of it; and, with all the intemperate heat and enthusiasm of party, swore that, if he had the power, he would not leave one of the bloody-minded monsters alive.

I was both surprized and shocked; and could not help replying with a sneer, that he must certainly be a very great enemy to persecution, since he should take such a generous method of shewing his love to mankind. To this he was going to reply, when Mr. Smith very respectfully put him in mind of his daughter, and several of his late wife's relations.

He immediately took the hint, and acknowledged that he had gone too far; said, that he loved his daughter better than she deserved; and having given her abundance of foul names, and nearly as many tender ones, as his resentment, or his affection, had the predominancy, strenuously desired to see the saucy, obstinate vagabond.

I dont know, Madam, what idea you will form of the character of this gentleman; a man of dissolute morals, standing up for the cause of religion and truth. He swore and preached in a breath, and uttered his sentiments with the positive assurance of a Jesuit. His words were dictated by his passions, which hurried him away with too much violence to suffer him to be guided by the calmer dictates of reason. And, indeed, so difficult was it to judge of his real character, that it was some time before I knew whether I ought to rank

him

him amongſt men of ſenſe, or perfect brutes; though I was rather inclined to place him amongſt the latter. But I was miſtaken; he was really poſſeſſed of many amiable qualities, joined to a tolerable ſhare of ſenſe, which lay in a manner dormant till the heat of his paſſion had ſubſided.

As ſoon as he was ſilent, I let him know that he ſhould ſpeedily ſee his daughter, but that I thought it neceſſary to prepare both him and her for the interview. I then, without ceremony, began her hiſtory from the time I firſt knew her; related every circumſtance of her behaviour that could contribute to ſet her character in a fair light; deſcribed the ſevere treatment ſhe had met with; and concluded with relating what had paſſed that morning, and the condition in which I had left her. I called her my friend; I reproached him for endeavouring to enſlave her conſcience; and mingled theſe reproaches with more bitter ones on myſelf, for my unjuſt ſuſpicions. When I began to ſpeak, I reſolved to plead her cauſe with all the art I was miſtreſs of; but, carried away by the importance of the occaſion, I ſoon loſt ſight of art. I ſpoke with the fervour of friendſhip; and while I was deſcribing the ſcene of her diſtreſs, which our raſh folly had involved her in, a guſh of involuntary tears, which ſeemed to flow from my repentance, and his inſenſibility, raiſed the father in him to ſuch a degree, as ſeemed to render it difficult for him to contain himſelf.

He could not now be kept from Dorothea. He confeſſed that he had been more to blame than he had ever imagined: he would ſee his poor girl immediately. He loved her better than ever he did. 'And did ſhe,' cried he, 'be-'have ſo prudently? Did ſhe ſay, 'ſhe felt ſuch tenderneſs for me? Did 'ſhe not rather tell you, I am a paſſion-'ate old fool? Well, ſhe is a good 'girl, and I am glad I have found her. 'Let me ſee her, Madam, let me ſee her,' added he. 'I will ſee my poor daugh-'ter inſtantly.'

He was now in a ſituation that gave me the higheſt joy. I inſtantly aroſe, and ran up ſtairs. She was ſitting in a melancholy, thoughtful poſture; and, as ſoon as I entered the room, gave me a look that at once expreſſed her fear and impatience; but her countenance began to brighten into chearfulneſs, even before I had time to ſpeak. She ran towards me, to embrace me; while I had only time to cry—'Victory! my dear 'Dorothea, victory! I have conquered.' —'I ſee it, Madam,' ſaid ſhe; 'but how? 'by what means?'—'I have now no 'time to anſwer you,' cried I; 'your 'father waits for you; he is ſubdued, 'he is ſoftened, he longs to ſee you.' Here I took hold of her hand and led her down, her colour changing at every ſtep. When we entered the room, her father ran to her, claſped her in his arms, and laviſhed upon her the moſt endearing expreſſions of kindneſs. It was purely the joy of a father who had recovered a dearly beloved child, after it had been, by ſome accident, loſt, without the leaſt mixture of reproach or bitterneſs. Dorothea was ſilent for ſome time, and only expreſſed her joy by her tears; but at laſt, preſſing his hand—'Do you, do you, dear Sir, forgive me?' cried ſhe. He gave her the warmeſt aſſurances that he did, embraced her again, took his chair, and made her ſit by him.

It is eaſy to conceive, Madam, that Lucius and I muſt have great delight in obſerving the happineſs to which we had ſo greatly contributed. For my part, I received many engaging compliments from both father and daughter, with which Lucius ſeemed more pleaſed than if they had been paid to himſelf.

Mr. Smith, I had obſerved, was extremely attentive to the praiſes I had beſtowed on Dorothea; he was greatly affected with her ſtory; and, for the reſt of the day, ſeemed to bear an uncommon ſhare in the happy reconciliation. He obſerved all her motions, and methought there was ſomething in his air that expreſſed as much of the lover as the friend. For her part, ſhe viewed him without terror; he was no longer the formidable man that had filled her with ſuch dreadful apprehenſions; and, ſo far from having any inclination to run away, ſhe converſed with him with all the freedom of an old acquaintance.

I am ſtrangely addicted to the writing of long letters, which, I am afraid, tire you; and, for the future, I believe, I muſt be leſs communicative, in order to be leſs troubleſome. Be pleaſed to preſent

sent my compliments to his lordship; and be assured that, whether my letters are long or short, I shall always be, as I am at present, your sincere and most affectionate friend,

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XLIII.

DEAR MADAM,

YOUR rallying so agreeably an assertion in one of my former letters, that rural scenes are the most unfruitful of adventures, has so much the air of a compliment, that, however undeserved, I think I ought to thank you for it. You may consider Dorothea's story in what light you please; the interest you are pleased to take in her good or bad fortune, ought to induce me to send you the particulars which are still behind. Without any farther preamble, therefore, I proceed.

Believe me, Madam, there is as great a difference between Dorothea's father, when angry, and when pleased, as between any two persons upon earth; you would not even take him to be the same man; were it possible for you to have been an hour or two in his company, after his reconciliation, even you must have thought my last letter a vile slander on his character. So much do these furious passions distort the mind!

The rest of the day was spent very agreeably; and, at the same time, nothing was omitted that could contribute to confirm the happiness of the amiable Dorothea. Lucius artfully introduced the subject of religious liberty, which he proved to be the birthright of every reasonable being. He made use of the most convincing arguments. He quoted the incomparable Mr. Locke's piece* on this subject; a work which, he assured us, was of more value than a Peruvian mine. A high price, I must confess. Mr. Smith joined with Lucius to answer some objections. He then represented persecution as arraigning the infinite sagacity of the sovereign Creator of all things, who, to make room for heaven-born Charity, had wisely given such a variety of tastes, degrees of capacity and understanding, to the mind of man, from whence result the love of truth, and the test of every kind and benevolent affection. Uniformity of sentiment, Madam, is, I find, in his opinion, no more desirable, than the dull uniform prospect of a smooth and wide-stretched plain; or rather a large tract of barren sand, where no interrupting shades, none of the blooming beauties that arise from the varied tints of trees, of shrubs, of turfs, of flowers, diversify the enlivening prospect; whilst Charity, amidst the greatest variety of tempers, educations, and capacities, like the invigorating power of the sun, presents the most lovely scene, and gives life, and spirit, and beauty, to all around: mutual complacency, and benevolence, breathe an eternal spring; and at once blossom, bear fruit, and yield a friendly shade.

Methinks I hear him still, and still see the blaze of humanity darting from his eyes; when he added—'With this 'view do I look upon my native country, the seat of Liberty, and her sister's 'earthly throne. In this view let us 'regard the whole world. The honest 'Turk shall be my friend; the sober, 'faithful Chinese, that lays the divine 'Confucius to his heart; and the Indian of either world, blest with simple innocence and native truth, shall 'be my brothers. Wherever I find a 'man who loves his God, and loves 'mankind, I will hug him to my 'breast.'

Here Lucius paused a while; and then smiling, asked Dorothea, what she thought of this rant? 'Am I not, Ma-'dam,' said he, 'in the right? is not 'this a very desirable disposition of 'mind?' She gave her approbation; on which he replied—'Then what must 'you think of Popery, with her smooth 'uniformity of barrens sands, which, 'blown with the baleful wind of perse-'cution, arise in curling torrents, and 'spread ruin and destruction over all 'the wide creation? Nor can the storm 'be laid till showers of blood, pouring 'from honest hearts, beat down the dust, 'and, for a time, hush the wild uproar 'to a calm.'

'Forgive me, Madam,' added Lucius, seeing her bite her lips, 'I do but just 'touch on a subject, which, if dressed in 'plainer

* Letter on Toleration.

'plainer language, would, I am sure, 'wound your tender heart. Persecu-'tion, whether in Papist or Protestant, 'is a tempest raised by the breath of hell. 'And, believe me, if there can be a 'Christian without humanity and cha-'rity, a Devil may be a Saint.'

Mr. Smith, who appeared not a little delighted with Lucius's flights, and who, doubtless, comprehended his motive for introducing this subject, took care to keep it up for some time longer. He entered upon the cause of liberty as connected with a free enquiry, and shewed the necessity of making use of reason, in order to discover truth from error. He was seconded by Dorothea's father; and Lucius closed their observations, by giving a slight glance at the principal systems of religion throughout the world. The various pretences to infallibility were considered and exposed in all; the folly of suffering the conscience to be enslaved by the Dervise, or the Christian priest, proved equally ridiculous; and the impossibility of discovering truth from error, where no enquiry was made, as great in the zealot of Rome and London as in that of Turkey or Siam.

These subjects, Madam, were managed with such delicacy, that it was impossible for even Dorothea to be offended. She seemed to listen with pleasure; and, when it was done, said, with a smile, that they had inspired her with a love of truth, and that, though she was very sure she should be a Catholick as long as she lived, yet, for the future, she would be one upon rational principles, and boldly venture to study the truth of her religion, and to read even those pieces with care that had been wrote against it.

Mr. Smith received this declaration with as great an appearance of pleasure as even her father himself: and nothing was omitted that could confirm this agreeable disposition.

You perceive, I dare say, the tedious dulness into which I am sinking. My spirits, indeed, begin to flag. I will, therefore, hasten to a conclusion, lest a more interesting subject should intervene, and demand my pen.

The rest of our conversation was little more than chit-chat. Dorothea had many questions to ask concerning her friends in the country, some of whom were dead, and some were married; and these, though they furnished not the least kind of amusement to us, as their very names were unknown, engaged almost her whole attention for the little time she had to stay.

The next morning I had the mortification of taking leave of Dorothea, whose father would not be prevailed upon to stay any longer. We parted with many reciprocal expressions of affection. But, to the no small surprize of Lucius, Mr. Smith, who, at their first meeting, of his own accord had proposed to stay with us at least a week, resolved to accompany them; nor could we, by all the arguments in our power, induce him to keep his word.

I have only one word more to add: yesterday it was a month since they left us; and we have this minute received a letter from Mr. Smith, in which he informs us, that what severity and restraint could not do, mildness and freedom have accomplished; that the amiable Dorothea is already a Protestant, and that he hopes for the happiness of speedily possessing the lovely convert.

It is with great difficulty that I have been able to write thus far; I am really very ill, but as much as ever your ladyship's affectionate

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XLIV.

I Have now, Madam, the pleasure of informing you, that we have another person added to the family; you, I am sure, will be glad to find that I am able to tell you so. I am now a mother in the strictest sense, and was happily brought to bed three weeks ago.

O my friend! how delightfully does the mind glow with gratitude, thus rising from the struggle of convulsive pangs, from the languor of expiring life! The dear helpless infant, too, the subject of our future care, and future joy! With what new, what tender sensations, do we view the little gift of Nature entrusted to our protection! Methought a beam of heavenly comfort shot through my soul! Ease, joy—transporting joy, and mingled fondness: all delight, extasy, and love! My heart overflowed at once with gratitude, and the softest maternal affection.

Before the first week was over, I began to be alarmed, lest my fondness for my boy should supersede my affection

fection for my girl. I told my fears to Marilla, who was conſtantly with me, and deſired that I might have her brought to me every day: and while I endeavour to divide my heart between them both, the pretty creature, by twenty winning ways, ſeems to ſtrive to hold faſt my affections. My fears, Madam, were groundleſs: I muſt love her; and I am really glad that my affections ſo eaſily correſpond with my duty.

After this rambling, incoherent letter, you will not wonder if I tell you that, though I am as well as can be expected, my head is ſtill very weak: indeed my eyes fail me, and I am forced to conclude. May every bleſſing attend you. I am, yours, &c.

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XLV.

DEAR MADAM,

IT was with extreme concern that I read your laſt letter. Indeed, I ſincerely ſympathize in your affliction. I don't wonder that the ſudden death of a perſon, ſo dear to you as his lordſhip was, ſhould damp all your ſpirits, and make the moſt ſprightly pen that ever wrote deal in the moſt ſolemn and awful truths. Sickneſs, pain, and death, have indeed a natural tendency to check the ſallies of a gay diſpoſition; to call back the thoughts from the pleaſurable amuſements, the vain purſuits of life; and, for a while, to confine them to the more important review of our own conduct: they are bitter medicines, but ſuch as have the moſt healing virtues—virtues adapted to ſtrengthen, improve, and exalt the mind. To be forced to take a final leave of that form we love; to bid a long adieu to the ſpirit with whom we have daily converſed with pleaſing intercourſe—is very hard; the ſenſible heart-ſtrings muſt feel the dreadful rent, the diſtreſsful mind is torn with anguiſh. But, O Madam! why do you ſay *for ever?* The ſeparation is not ſurely for ever. Soon you will ſee him in a more lovely form. Soon the well known mind, cloathed with heavenly radiance, will congratulate your arrival on the bliſsful ſhore. Why do you complain that 'he 'is now a ſenſeleſs lump of clay?' Miſtake not the object of your affection, he is all life and active ſpirit. Thoſe ſhining virtues that, while you enumerate them, ſeem to add to your grief, and which, you tell me, will ever renew your ſorrow, ought to be the pleaſing ſource of joy. Though you lament his loſs, lament not his exaltation, nor derive your tears from the very ſubject of his felicity. He is in the land of virtue; it's native clime. How often do you repeat the words, *poor, dear man!* and dwell on ſounds expreſſive only of pity! Pity, Madam, is not for angels. It is you alone who are the ſufferer. O, could you but be ſenſible of his happineſs, extaſy and tranſporting rapture would dry up your tears! Would you wiſh him back? Would you have him, to pleaſe you, leave the ſeats of bliſs, and exchange the regions of unfading felicity, for a world of ſin, tranſient happineſs, intermingled with pain and trouble? No, this you cannot wiſh. 'But he was 'happy too ſoon.' Too ſoon his pain, and ſorrow, and dangerous ſtate of trial, were at an end. You would have prolonged his miſery. If this be love, what is hatred?

O my dear friend! recollect yourſelf, and, filled with a generous and refined devotion, repoſe your mind on God. Endeavour to loſe the ſenſe of your own private apparent loſs in the delightful contemplation of his tranſcendent goodneſs. Repoſe yourſelf on his ſovereign will, whoſe determinations are always ſafeſt, wiſeſt, beſt. Let every dewy tear be wiped away by the happineſs of him you love. Love him ſtill, but be diſintereſted in your affection; imitate and rejoice in his virtues; and, while you dwell with pleaſure on his felicity, anticipate your own.

'Death's but a path that muſt be trod,
'If man would ever paſs to God;
'A port of calms, a ſtate of eaſe,
'From the rough rage of ſwelling ſeas.
'Nor can the parted body know,
'Nor wants the ſoul theſe forms of woe.
'As men who long in priſon dwell,
'With lamps that glitter round the cell,
'Whene'er their ſuff'ring years are run,
'Spring forth to greet the glitt'ring ſun:
'Such joys, though far tranſcending ſenſe,
'Have pious ſouls at parting hence.
'On earth, and in the body plac'd,
'A few and evil years they waſte:
'But when their chains are caſt aſide,
'See the gay ſcene unfolding wide,
'Clap the glad wing, and tow'r away,
'And mingle with the blaze of day.'

PARNELL.

With

With the most tender sympathy and commiseration, believe me to be, dear Madam, your ladyship's most affectionate friend,

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XLVI.

DEAR MADAM,

HOW great is the power of friendship! With one dash of your pen you involve me in grief, and oblige me, by an irresistible force, to taste the bitterness of your sorrow: with the next, you inspire me with ten thousand sensations, all of them agreeable, all delightful. Nothing in the world, Madam, could give Lucius and me greater pleasure, than your proposal to honour us with your company—Honour do I say? my friendship is offended at the compliment, and would let you know that vanity has no share in our satisfaction. We heartily embrace your offer; and nothing shall be wanting, on our part, to make your residence with us perfectly happy.

But have you, indeed, the resolution to leave the delights of the gay circle, the glittering splendor of conspicuous greatness? Can you really have the courage to bid adieu to pomp, and all the parade of ostentation and vanity, the dear delight of a thousand fine ladies, and, in their opinion, the summit of all human happiness? Can you forsake the residence of polite flattery and compliment, to dwell with simple truth and sincere friendship? and the important hurry of attending on the modes and forms of greatness, for perfect liberty, and a life gliding on in the clear smooth stream of rural peace?

O Madam! how many delightful ideas rush upon my mind, upon the prospect of such an addition to our little friendly circle? Your enlivening wit, tempered with sober contemplation, will heighten all the other blessings I enjoy. Ever since I have received your letter—the most welcome letter I ever received—my imagination has been filled with the most pleasing images, nor can I divert it from the flattering subject. I have already rambled with you, in idea, along my most favourite walks, and have sallied out with you to taste the fragrant breath of the morning.—But whither does my roving fancy carry me? I beg pardon, Madam, for thus amusing you with idle visions; but friendship would have it so, and I only obeyed it's dictates.

We had yesterday a piece of news that struck us with an uncommon surprize. My father, Mr. Manly—I mean, received a letter from Holland, which informed him, that his brother, who had parted from him in disgust about twenty years ago, and who had never seen him since, was dead, and had left him, in money and effects, to the value of forty thousand pounds.

Lucius and I happened to be present at the receipt of this letter, which immediately opened a very affecting scene. It was read by my father, with a composure of countenance which would not even suffer us to guess at the contents. He had no sooner run it over, than giving Sophronia a most affectionate look—'My dear,' said he, 'you have 'been a witness of my extravagance 'and folly; and it is now in my power 'to let you see that my repentance is 'sincere, and that no change of fortune 'can make me relapse into the wild 'pursuits of vice. It is only since my 'distresses, that I have known what 'it is to live: since that time, my happiness has been centered in you and 'my family; to make you happy forms 'the most pleasing part of my life, 'and it will ever do so. This alone 'deserves the name of life. O my dear, 'your virtues have fixed me yours for 'ever. I here find that my brother is 'dead. I thought he had been long 'dead. He died a batchelor, and has 'left me all his effects. Had this happened some years ago, I had been still 'what I now blush to think that I ever 'was.' Here the tears stood in his eyes. He was standing, and my mother was seated before him. His looks and expressions, joined to her surprize, had hitherto kept her motionless; but she was now unable to contain herself any longer; she suddenly arose, and threw her arms about his neck. He embraced her; he pressed her to his heart, crying—'No, my Sophronia, my vices shall 'never more disturb the quiet of this 'dear breast.' She begged him not to mention the name of vice: told him, that his affection was all that was necessary to make her happy; and that was wealth enough, and of more importance to her than all the riches in the world; and that with such a husband,

and such children, she had, for a good while past, thought herself the happiest woman in England.

At the word *children*, she cast an affectionate look at Lucius, Marilla, and me; at least, my heart was willing to rank me among the number of those from whose tenderness she derived so much of her satisfaction. But the moment she observed me, she withdrew her arms, and seeming to struggle with her tenderness, stepped back, and again seated herself in her chair.

My father, at the same time, turned to Lucius and Marilla; called them his dear, his virtuous children; and Lucius, in particular, his benefactor and his friend; and added something about gratitude, which Lucius could not suffer. 'Dear Sir,' said he, 'forbear these 'moving expressions of your goodness. 'For Heaven's sake, talk not of gratitude to me. What must I be, if I 'could hear, with patience, such language from a father—a tender and 'affectionate father! I know you love 'me; then why do you make use of 'words that shock my love to you, and 'which both nature and duty forbid my 'hearing?'

My father made no reply, but saluted Marilla and me; and, after giving me some particular expressions of affection, we all took our seats; when, giving the letter to Lucius, he desired him to read it, which he had no sooner done, than the conversation turned upon the particulars.

One who reflects on the misfortunes of this family, would be apt to conceive, that such a sudden and unexpected change in their situation must have occasioned the most extravagant transports of joy; and if he had only a superficial knowledge of human nature, that my father's behaviour was extremely unnatural. Marilla's eyes, indeed, sparkled with a peculiar pleasure: and I could not help expressing a lively satisfaction, from considering that Lucius would now gain from his father an equivalent to what he had acquired from mine: and thus, being placed more upon a level as to circumstances, approve my father's conduct to the most avaricious of his friends. The day was spent with rather more gravity than usual. But the want of mirth was supplied by the sweet complacency of friendly hearts, exulting with exquisite joy in the happiness of each other; while the composure and equanimity of mind which appeared in those most concerned, still heightened the opinion I had conceived of their characters.

I ought, Madam, to have told you, that the occasion of our visit at my father's was to see our daughter; the dear sweet creature is very much indisposed, and the doctor informs us that her disorder will end in the small-pox.

Let me speedily know how long it will be before I shall have the pleasure of telling you, in person, how much I am your affectionate friend,

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XLVII.

DEAR MADAM,

HOW are the sweets of life intermingled with bitterness! My poor dear girl has now left the world, and gone to the regions of spotless innocence and peace. I had almost said, that innocence itself is dead, and fled to it's native skies—my little son occurs to my thoughts, and I retract the expression. That opening mind, which every day received new ideas, now feels the full blaze of truth, and perhaps would look with contempt on the boasted knowledge of mortals. Her pretty laugh, the innocent lisp of her half-formed sentences, when, with little sportive arts, she strove to court my smiles, are ever lost to me.

Oh, why did I let her take such hold of my heart! How vain were my tears, lest I should not love her as I ought! But yet, methinks, had I loved her less—I cannot think of that neither—I would not love her less. But she is happy, pretty lovely cherub! she is happy; for ever free from vice, from care, and pain, and sorrow.

She was seized with the small-pox, as the physician had foretold; a painful and a loathsome disease! My affection, and the sense of my duty, compelled me to see her. I saw her every day. But, O Madam! how was the sense of her loss swallowed up by my solicitude for my son, who was seized with the same distemper about twenty-four hours before she died! O my heart! what did I feel! I blamed my rashness—and, as if my duty and affection had been a crime, reproached myself for what deserved no reproach.

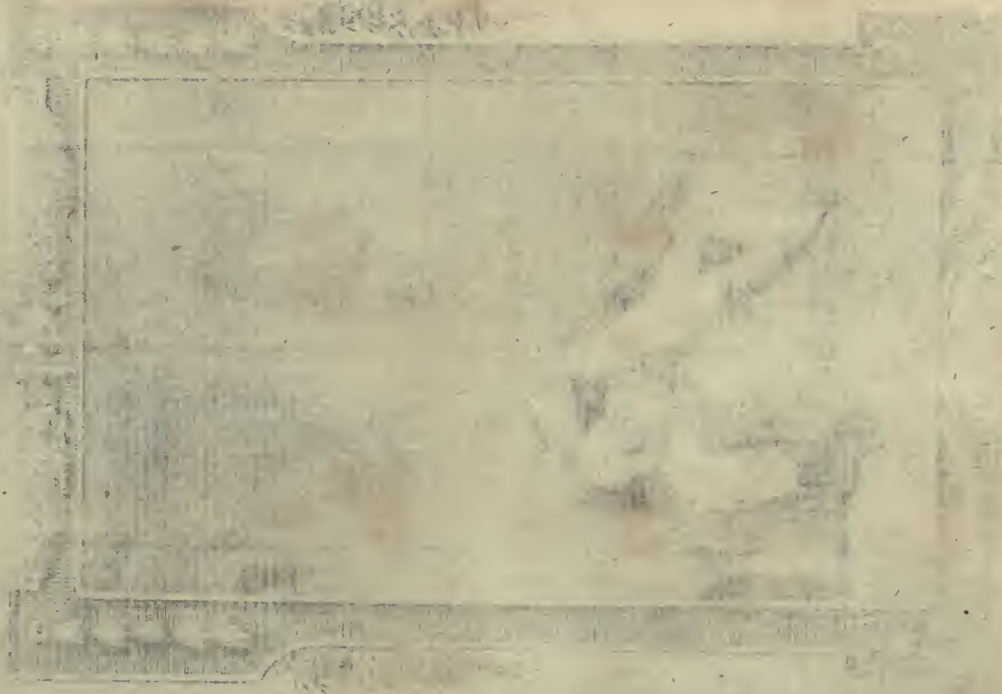

Plate. IV.

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reproach. With a noble fortitude, Lucius endeavoured to chear my ſpirits, and to raiſe my hopes. He talked of reſignation, and of Providence; and felt himſelf the reſignation he would inſpire. At firſt the taſk was hard, but ſoon the healing balm ran through my ſoul—he ended, and all within was peace. Every favourable ſymptom ſoon appeared, and with them ſoothing Hope. In ſhort, he grew paſt danger—he recovered, and my grief was loſt in joy.

In my preſent ſituation, while I conſider together the loſs of a child, that I loved almoſt as much as if nature had bid me love; and the recovery of another, whom maternal affection had entwined about my heart; my mind enjoys all the united force of ſerenity, reſignation, and thankfulneſs. I conſider my dear infant as left below for future uſefulneſs, to be the delight of his family, and a bleſſing to mankind; ſpared, that he may riſe to high attainments in virtue, to perpetuate his name, and the benevolence that glows in his father's breaſt, when his father, and your Felicia, ſhall be no more; and, in ſhort, as ſpared to give him room to obtain thoſe more glorious, more exquiſite, more refined delights, in the world of bliſs, to which the negative goodneſs of helpleſs infancy can hardly be ſuppoſed to be entitled.

You ſee, Madam, that, in this plain, I have left titles, grandeur, and ſhining poſts of honour, to be ſtruggled for by the buſy world. May virtue be the glory of my ſon; I am anxious for no other dignities. May the doing good be his employment, his poſt of honour. O! call not this humility; it is a pride of the nobleſt kind. Theſe are the flattering hopes that ſwell a mother's breaſt; and may they be the preſage of bleſſings, ſtretched out to the fartheſt limits of time; while a MANLY, with all the virtues of my Lucius, ſhall, in ſucceſſion, ariſe in every age, with calm benevolence to meditate on happineſs, and diffuſe it's influence all around! O, how my heart beats with the great idea! —My child is this moment brought to me: with what elevated tenderneſs do I look upon him! I give him the breaſt he longs for, I preſs him to my boſom, and write again.

May theſe lips, that now draw thy ſuſtenance from me, be ever the fountain of truth, ever pure in their expreſſions, and ſtrangers to the wanton's kiſs! May the joys of innocence, and as much peace as mortals can know, always dwell within this little heart! And when this heart ſhall melt with ſoftneſs for ſome lovely maid, may ſhe return with purity thy flame, and render all thy happineſs compleat!—Bleſs me! what nonſenſe I am writing, with my child in my lap! But I attempt in vain to loſe ſight of the ſubject, and I hope the candour of friendſhip will bear with the workings of maternal affection.

Lucius is now engaged in an employment that you will doubtleſs imagine to be extremely viſionary. He is ſtudying the hiſtory of man from his moſt early infancy. And as his ſon is much too young to expreſs his ideas in any other way but by the traces of his countenance, and by inarticulate ſounds, he examines theſe with a particular attention, in order to diſcover the ſtrength of his perceptions, and the progreſs of his ideas. This employment is extremely ſuitable to his philoſophick turn of mind; though I muſt confeſs, that it ſometimes makes me laugh to ſee the aſſiduous care with which he endeavours to trace the impreſſions made on the little features of a face which nature has ſcarcely finiſhed, but which, however, ſufficiently deſcribe wonder, pleaſure, and pain. From this ſtudy Lucius propoſes to derive the greateſt advantages; he will have an early knowledge of a heart, in the happineſs of which he is moſt nearly concerned; and by this diſcover the degrees and bent of the paſſions, the ſtrength of the moral taſte; and determine, with the greateſt evidence, this important truth, whether there are any ſeeds of vice implanted in the heart:* a doctrine contended for by many learned and good men, with as much heat and zeal as if vice was the higheſt glory and perfection of human nature.

So aſſiduous is he already in this taſk, that he has even interfered in my choice of a nurſery-maid, and prevailed upon me to make this office worth the attendance of a

* The reader may find a conciſe and excellent hiſtory of the underſtanding, and the paſſions, in the Preceptor, Vol. II. Book i. Sect. 1. A performance that the editor fears to commend, leſt he ſhould injure it by his praiſe.

perſon of ſolidity and underſtanding; one of a tolerable education, and of a ſober, reputable family. And this was the more neceſſary, as ſhe is obliged to deviate from the common practice, and to regulate her actions by his, or my directions, in the minuteſt particulars. He is ſuch a friend to nature, that he will not ſuffer her to be conſtrained; the body muſt not be bound up with rollers, nor ſmothered with the heat of flannel; be uſed with a miſtaken delicacy, and too cloſely preſerved from the inclemency of the weather. But I muſt not enter into particulars: only this I ſhall ſay, that he is ſo unfaſhionably polite, as to conſider the mother's ſuckling her own child as one of the indiſpenſable obligations of nature; as a duty that can never be transferred to another, except in a caſe of the utmoſt neceſſity: and, indeed, had I been as averſe to conviction upon this head as the gay fine lady at court, I muſt have either renounced all pretenſions to reaſon, or ſuffered myſelf to own the force of his arguments.

But his firſt ſtudy is to cultivate the underſtanding; or, as Mr. Thompſon expreſſes it—

'To teach the young idea how to ſhoot.'

The nobleſt employment that can exerciſe the attention of a reaſonable being! an employment that, however, muſt at preſent be confined within a narrow compaſs; ſince, for ſome time, it can only conſiſt in preſerving the confuſed undiſtinguiſhing capacity of infancy from receiving bad impreſſions: and here the care ought, in his opinion, to begin with life itſelf. The tender brain muſt not be diſturbed; nor the mind, in it's firſt exertions, be ſtarted by loud or ſudden noiſes. This care increaſes in proportion as the mind enlarges; and as it ſtill continues capable of receiving impreſſions from objects of terror, theſe muſt ſtill be induſtriouſly excluded. About a month ago, when we were at my father's, Lucius was very much ruffled at finding his daughter afraid of the dark. He was certain that—pardon the impropriety of the expreſſion—an object that had ſo frequently occurred, and which muſt have been familiar to the child, could never excite ſuch fear, had not it's mind been taught to connect with it ſome unnatural and terrifying ideas. This was, in the eſteem of Lucius, an affair of great importance: he ſearched into the cauſe, and found that one of the ſervants had frightened the pretty creature, with threats of Tom Dark, and other words which to children are of direful ſound. Would you believe it, Madam? for this cauſe alone, he prevailed on his mother to turn away the poor girl! I confeſs that I was ſo ſtruck with this, that I could not forbear telling him, that I thought he behaved in a very arbitrary and cruel manner: when, in juſtification of his conduct, he ran to his ſiſter's cloſet, fetched a volume of the Spectator, and read, before all the ſervants, a performance on that very ſubject, that ſtruck me dumb. However, he had no objection to my providing for the girl till I could get her another place: and, in return for this civility, ſhe has had the ingratitude, and the impudence, to raiſe a report, that Lucius had this child by me before our marriage. But, in the country, no vice is indulged with ſuch a keen reliſh as ſlander.

Lucius has been very careful in his remarks on the ſeveral ways by which the mind of infancy is induſtriouſly impreſſed with the moſt hateful extremes of all the paſſions*, ſelfiſhneſs, pride, revenge, inſolence, avarice, cruelty, and, in ſhort, all the vices which ſpring up in after life; when the mind is ruined without deſign, and the heart in ſport taught to be vicious before the tongue can ſpeak, and all the tender ſenſibilities of humanity are utterly perverted. Againſt theſe methods of corruption he propoſes to be ever on his guard, becauſe traces ſo early made are ſeldom perfectly eraſed: and, indeed, this kind of treatment ought more to be avoided, as it is infinitely more fatal in its conſequences than all the diſtempers that can affect the bodily health.

This, Madam, though of prodigious importance, is only a negative kind of education. But, to implant a love of truth, and a thirſt after knowledge; to teach the young underſtanding to exert its powers; to refine, to elevate, to enlarge the ideas; and to lead the eager, admiring youth, by the ſweet allure-

* See ſome hints of theſe methods of corruption in the note to page 13. Vol. I. which the reader may eaſily enlarge from his own obſervations on the conduct of parents, nurſes, &c.

ments

ments of pleasure, to the highest attainments in virtue, to rectitude of manners, to rejoice early in his immortality, and to anticipate the divine delights of heaven by a disinterested love for mankind; a love widely extended, and ever prompting to acts of beneficence and diffusive goodness: this is an employment as noble as the attainment is godlike, and to this does Lucius already raise his ideas; this he considers as the previous study, the earliest exercise of childhood. He proposes to dress up morality, and the sublimest truths of natural religion, in the easy * language of infancy; and by degrees to pour in more and more light, as the understanding enlarges, and the mind grows more and more capacious; and by encouraging the restless curiosity natural to children, give incessant employment for the rational faculties. He considers English as the most important of all the languages to an Englishman. His child, he says, shall study all it's beauties, learn to read with a grace, and, if possible, to write with elegance; to adapt his language to his sentiments, and to express his thoughts with ease and fluency; to form his style, and to settle his judgment, by a careful attention to the works of the most celebrated English authors; be taught to point out their beauties, to comment on the noble sentiment, to relish, even to rapture, the tender beauties of Spencer, the lightning of Shakespeare, and the shining glory of Milton.

The languages he considers only as the key to further knowledge, and not knowledge itself: these, even in the midst of study, he would render subservient to his grand design, and make the dry task of words delightful by a continual acquisition of agreeable sensations and improved ideas. He would please himself with hearing the voice of unprejudiced nature, a mind unbiassed with the forms of thinking which prevail amongst mankind, decide in what consists the merit of such and such an action; he would hear the tongue of innocence explain the glory or infamy of an Alexander, a Trajan, or a Domitian; he would cherish and fix the just sentiment, would improve the random thought, and, where the judgment failed, would set it right. How delightful must this exercise of the faculties be to a child! To be led by it's own reflections to a constant series of new ideas—how manly, how rational the entertainment! It must inspire the mind with a continual spring of self-complacency, and make the most rugged steps to learning pleasant. Lucius would endeavour to obtain the assistance of some decayed gentleman adorned at once with piety, good-nature, learning, a knowledge of mankind, and a free and genteel address. A person of this character must be the tutor of his son, and share with him in the important task; he must live in the family, and in all respects be treated like a gentleman and a friend. Learning will thus be made a high entertainment, especially as it will be varied, at proper intervals, by the history and constitution of our own country. Under their conduct, the aspiring youth must improve in knowledge and understanding, must be introduced early into life, emboldened, encouraged to speak, and to bear a part in the most polite conversation, at an age when learning generally consists in mere sounds, and pleasure in vanity and folly: and, while a youth, we shall have the rational delight of seeing our child a man, a friend, a companion.

I am prepared to hear you laugh at me, and express your surprize that, notwithstanding the great uncertainty of life, I can thus launch into futurity; talk of embellishing a mind yet incapable of fixed ideas; and from an infant of two months old, by the strength of imagination, draw a line parallel to that of time, and reckon our duration by that of the sun and moon. But blame me as much as you please, some of the sweetest comforts of life depend on expectation; and was it not for hope, which recreates the mind with distant prospects of pleasure, our very enjoyments would be apt to flatten, and life itself grow dull and insipid. But it is not only a remedy for the vapours, and the most effec-

* Something of this kind is already attempted in the Christmas Box, two small volumes printed for the use of children.

tual

tual cure for the reſtleſs mind; it is a cordial comfort to the diſtreſſed, and joy to the miſerable.

Education, Madam, is a daily topick of diſcourſe, a ſubject to us the moſt intereſting; can my friend then think it impertinent? But if it appear ſo now, as you will ſoon be a mother, you will ſoon be convinced of it's importance. Lucius is now ſo fond of it, that he talks of little elſe; he is continually quoting to me the beſt authors on the ſubject, and from theſe I have collected my ideas, which, as they are ever preſent to my mind, I ſhould have found ſome difficulty to ſuppreſs.

Haſten, dear Madam, by your preſence, the happineſs of your affectionate

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XLVIII.

HOW tedious is Time, when his wings are loaded with expectation! My laſt, I imagined, would have concluded our epiſtolary correſpondence, at leaſt for ſome years. I propoſed to throw aſide my pen, to bid an eternal adieu to tedious narrations, high flights, rapturous nonſenſe, and long letters; but the very morning in which we were preparing to ſet out to meet you, with an alacrity inſpired by our joy, to be diſappointed with a fortnight's delay, what a damp did it give to my ſpirits! I could hardly meet with a greater diſappointment. Let me have no more of your letters, Madam, I beſeech you. A fortnight! fifteen days!—indeed it is quite intolerable.

We have had a very diverting account, from my ſiſter Marilla, of a moſt ſingular courtſhip. My wife couſin, it ſeems, has had the misfortune to fall deſperately in love with that engaging lady. The mighty wound was given at our houſe; but he had not there the power to make it known: he waited for a more favourable opportunity, which he had the penetration to foreſee might ſoon arrive; and, therefore, recommending himſelf as the beſt coachman in the univerſe, he earneſtly begged that ſhe would do him the honour to ſuffer him to drive her home in her chaiſe. She readily conſented to the propoſal; and he, perhaps, drawing a favourable concluſion from her eaſy compliance, was all life and thankfulneſs.

They accordingly mounted, and had drove but a ſmall diſtance from the houſe, when his natural ſelf-conceit proving too ſtrong for his baſhfulneſs, he could not reſiſt the preſent moment, and accordingly began with praiſing himſelf; a method of courtſhip, though a little uncommon, not altogether irrational: for as a perſon, deſirous to exchange a ſorry piece of goods for a better, ſhould prudently confine all his oratory to one ſide; ſo he imagined that he ought to give her a high opinion of his own merit, and not, by encreaſing her vanity by a miſapplied flattery, make the diſproportion greater than it really was. In conſequence of this refined ſophiſtry, and with the aſſiſtance of the phraſe, *though I ſay it that ſhould not ſay it*, which he introduced at proper intervals to ſhew his modeſty, he began a long detail of his uſeful travels; and very gallantly concluded with telling her, that though he had converſed with, and even had the honour to enjoy the good graces of the fineſt ladies in France and Italy, he was never made a captive to the little divinity till now.

Marilla, who had been held a good while in ſuſpenſe, could not help being ſurprized at this declaration, which, however, ſhe was ſo cruel as to turn into ridicule. The gaiety of her reply diſconcerted him for ſome moments: but, recovering himſelf, he anſwered very gravely, that he loved, and would for ever love her; and that, as it was not in her power to prevent it, ſhe ought to think of ſome way of making him happy, ſince that would be the ready way to make herſelf ſo. And that ſhe could never have a better huſband, ſince he would do all in his power to ſerve her.

His thoughts were ſo taken up with this anſwer, that, quite forgetful of his office, he drove againſt a tree, which unluckily grew by the ſide of the road; when, the wheel breaking, poor Marilla was thrown in the dirt; while the ſquire, giving a ſpring, flounced into an adjacent ditch, which happened to be full of water. Marilla, who had not received the leaſt hurt, was preſently on her feet, extending her hand to the relief of the poor dripping ſquire, which, by his touch, was as defiled as his own. She found him ſhaking his ears, and, with

with a moſt diſtreſsful countenance, attempting to clamber up the bank. His hat and wig floated on the ſtream, his face was as much beſmeared as his cloaths, and his whole figure ſuch as would have excited laughter in any other perſon but herſelf; but to her it was only an object of pity.

The ſervants, who were riding at ſome diſtance, no ſooner beheld his miſerable plight, than they made up to his aſſiſtance, and preſently ſet him on dry land. Having recovered his hat and wig, he began, with great confuſion, to make his apology, which ſhe interrupted, by deſiring him only to mind his own health, to take one of the horſes, and to ride with all the haſte he could to her father's, which was then not half a mile diſtant; and, ordering her ſervants to bring home the chaiſe, promiſed to follow him on foot. My couſin readily obeyed; and Marilla, who walks much better than moſt ladies about St. James's, was not very long after him. She entered the houſe unperceived, and having waſhed herſelf, and changed her cloaths, went down to the parlour, where ſhe found her lover ſitting with my father by a good fire: he had been accommodated with a large dram, as a preſervative from the effects of the cold; and care being taken to ſee him cleaned, and with freſh apparel put in a more comfortable plight, he was now in a proper ſituation to receive her.

Was it poſſible for my poor couſin to begin his amour under more unlucky auſpices! To be thus ſouſed, and, falling from his aſpiring hope, to become an object worthy of deriſion, rather than pity! What a painful humiliation! But, though I lament his fate, he had ſtill comforts, which the diffident and tender lover could never, on the like occaſion, have experienced: a hidden reſerve of vanity now ſtood his friend, and enabled him to bear up manfully under his diſgrace.

Marilla had no ſooner opened the door, than my couſin—who, having recollected, as he himſelf has ſince confeſſed, the obliging manner with which ſhe had endeavoured to help him out of the ditch, the little care ſhe took of herſelf, and her great concern for him, had not the leaſt doubt but that ſhe was perfectly in love with him—flew to her with open arms, gave her a rude kiſs, and, ſeizing hold of her hand, pulled her towards my father, who, as well as Marilla, was all amazement. My couſin deſired his fair-one not to be ſo coy; adding, that as he loved her, and ſhe loved him, their parents conſent was all that was neceſſary to their marriage; and then addreſſing himſelf to my father, cried, with the ſame vivacity—'Egad, Sir, you know my fortune, 'lookee, and ſo forth; and I hope you 'have no objection to my having the 'honour of being *votre petit-fils*.'—'The honour of being my grandſon!' cried my father, laughing; 'how is that? 'One language at a time, Sir, I be-'ſeech you. I don't underſtand——' He was here interrupted by Marilla, who, recovering the uſe of her tongue, cried out, 'What do you mean, Sir? Let go 'my hand—I cannot comprehend what 'you would be at. I love you!—'You!—What inſolence!' And now, exerting all her ſtrength, ſhe gained her liberty, and inſtantly flung out of the room.

As ſoon as ſhe was gone, my father told him, very frankly, that he could not poſſibly account for this rude behaviour; and that, when he came to his houſe in ſuch a deplorable condition, he did not think it was with deſign to affront his daughter; which, whatever were his motives, he would not ſuffer. My couſin aſſured him, with many oaths, that he was in earneſt, and that he only intended to aſk his conſent to marry his daughter, for that he had convincing proofs that ſhe loved him. My father anſwered, that he could never believe it; but that, if it was true, he had no objection to his family and fortune; and therefore inſiſted upon knowing what reaſon he had to believe that ſhe had an affection for him. My couſin replied, with a confident laugh, that he knew well enough how to judge; and that a lady might tell ſhe loved without making uſe of words; that if my father knew all, he would be of his mind; and that, after what had paſſed, ſhe ought not to have given herſelf ſuch airs; but it was all one, he could be as indifferent as her. Marilla now returned, and interrupted a converſation that was growing very warm on my father's ſide.

As ſhe entered the room, her young ſpark, reſolving to humble her, put on a look of inſenſibility, and walked by her with a careleſs, affected, and ſelf-ſatisfied air; but ſeeming not to obſerve it,

it, she seated herself close by her father, and in a calm and complaisant manner desired him to sit down. He obeyed with a smile, when the old gentleman repeated his command to explain, before his daughter, what he meant by his insinuations. But he did not chuse to hear him; and leaning his elbow on his knee, and staring up in Marilia's face, he asked her, which of those pretty hands it was that he had the misfortune to daub, when she was so kind as to strive to help him out of the ditch. He then proposed, that she should hold it out to him, that he might kiss it; called her a dear, sweet, fond fool; swore she could not help it; she was frightened for him, and off her guard, or else it would have been imprudent to yield so soon; that some men would like her the worse for it; but that he thought it a certain sign that she would make a good wife, since, though he was in fault, she took more care of him than herself.

Marilla, guessing the grounds of his behaviour, heard this arrogant speech without once attempting to interrupt him: but he had no sooner concluded, than giving him a contemptuous look—'I am sorry, Sir,' said she, 'that you 'should put such a false construction 'upon my humanity. I thought your 'life, or, at least, your health, in danger; I followed the first dictates of 'pity; and, instead of diverting myself with your misfortunes, endeavoured all I was able to remove them; and 'hurried you hither, where I knew you 'could be supplied with necessaries till 'you received them from home. But 'such is the return that the least act of 'kindness meets with from narrow 'and selfish minds. Yet, I assure you, 'Sir, I am not sorry for the little I 'have done with an intent to serve you: 'it spreads no blush on my cheek, it 'gives no uneasiness to my heart. 'There is not a creature living that I 'would not have served with equal tenderness. But how could your vanity 'suggest such a motive for my endeavouring, without any hurt to myself, 'to serve the brother of Amelia, and a 'near relation to my sister Felicia? 'What a wretched heart must you have, 'while you can form no idea of generosity, humanity, or compassion, without the allay of a particular affection! 'I wish you well, I confess; and more 'so, as the happiness of a worthy family is, in some degree, connected 'with yours: but, at the same time, I 'must be so plain as to tell you, that I 'neither do, nor ever can, love you. 'Your vices are an insurmountable obstacle. Your travels, which might 'have been of service to a man of sense 'and virtue, only serve to disgrace you, 'and display your ignorance and folly. 'Forgive me, Sir, I mean not to reflect 'on any involuntary imperfection; were 'you as kind to yourself as nature has 'been, you would be much more tolerable. But your debauchery, your 'boasted lewdness, and that impious 'custom of swearing, the unmannerly 'vice of a bully, must for ever exclude 'you from the affection of any woman 'who has sense, virtue, or true delicacy. Indeed, Sir, if you would be 'happy here, you must endeavour, at 'least, to copy your cousin Manly, 'and, like him, aspire to be happy 'hereafter. He, I dare say, enjoys 'more true delight from the reflections 'of his own mind, in one day, than 'you, with your boasted swing of pleasure, in the compass of a year.'—'Ay, 'than in the compass of an eternity,' cried my father, with an eagerness which could arise from nothing but a conviction founded on experience: 'I know 'it, Sir; feel it every day.'

I believe, Madam, you will think Marilla's reproof much kinder than my cousin's insolence deserved: she had, indeed, a favourable opportunity to humble his pride, and, by opening his eyes to his own follies, to lay an obligation on his whole family: to this point, then, she generously directed her views. Indeed, had she not treated him with such forcible severity, all she could say would have been useless. His mind is so extremely callous, that fine raillery, though ever so sharp, would not have hurt him.

The youth, struck with the ease of a conquest which he fancied he had too soon obtained, began already to think of my sister with indifference. His elbow was still on his knee, and his eyes, with the utmost confidence, fixed on hers: but she had hardly uttered three or four sentences, when surprize, vexation, and disappointment, appeared by turns on the stiff muscles of his unmeaning face, that was not at all formed to express his ideas; and yet these were wrought up in so strong a manner, as to

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give deformity to every feature: and at last, as if blasted by the indignant look of Virtue, he sighed, hung down his head, and sat abashed and confounded.

The bare idea of losing for ever, what he, just before, was ready to despise, made him almost distracted. His humility was now no less extravagant than his vanity before; it sunk even into meanness, and the most abject submissions: he rose, walked about the room, sat down again, wept, began to swear, and stopped short before the execration was finished; and, at last, after the solemnest protestations, that he never loved her a hundredth part so well as he did that moment, told her that he wished from the bottom of his heart that she had not a farthing in the world, or (to use his own elegant phrase) a smock to her back, that he might let her see his sincerity.

Marilla says, that it was impossible for her to avoid smiling, and instantly thanking him for his good wishes. As to my father, he burst into laughter: 'A fine 'speech truly!' said he; 'a most gene-'rous lover! So you would have her be 'a beggar, that you might force her to 'be miserable your own way? We are 'all greatly obliged to you.' My cousin endeavoured to vindicate himself; and after saying and unsaying, affirming and retracting, at last, with much hesitation and stammering, he made shift to declare, that he only meant to say, that he should be glad of an opportunity to convince her how very much he loved her.

But, Madam, I try your patience too much, as well as tire myself, in thus dwelling on circumstances that you may think beneath your notice. I shall only say, therefore, that by the time his servant had returned with linen and other cloaths from my aunt's, he began to be more reconciled to his fate; and, after having dressed himself afresh, took his leave with a tolerable grace. Not all the reasoning in the world could have made him so sensible of his folly, as this disappointment has done. Love seems to have refined his mind, and to have given a large scope to his understanding. He shuns his old companions; and, for the present at least, has thrown off his favourite vices. It has taught him the use of reflection; and, in short, if this reformation continues, we may have the happiness to see him have a just [illegible] to that respect and complacency which is ever due to the character of an honest man: a title the most significant, as it carries in itself the idea of intrinsick worth and excellence.

After all, a union between my cousin and Marilla would be extremely agreeable to me, could I be but once convinced of the sincerity of his reformation; since it would not only give a closer cement to the two families, but might happily confirm that virtue which has yet scarcely taken root. But why do I mention this? It is a thing altogether impracticable; she will not suffer me to speak of it; his want of sense is alone, in her esteem, an unsurmountable obstacle. The deficiency, she says, is on the wrong side; and she could never have a sincere esteem for a husband who was acknowledged by all her acquaintance to be greatly her inferior. And, indeed, I must confess that I think her in the right.

Lucius and I propose to meet you at Leicester. I sincerely wish you a safe and agreeable journey; and am, as you will ever find me when our friendship will be supported by a nearer intercourse, your ladyship's faithful friend,

FELICIA MANLY.

LETTER XLIX.

FROM CHARLOTTE TO LADY HARRIOT ***.

DEAR MADAM,

DID not I tell you, that I would not write till I could send you word how I liked my situation? Why then should you complain that I have not kept my word? I am in a new world; and three months is surely time little enough to form a judgment, where every thing I see, and every thing I hear, is as great a novelty as if I had been transported to some unknown region. Conceive, if you can, how surprizing it must be to me, who never beheld any thing but the splendors, or, as I now chuse to call them, the tedious ceremonies of a court, to meet with artless simplicity and plain-dressed truth, instead of polite flattery and high-strained compliment; and, in the room of every gaudy folly, to behold pure nature and white-robed innocence and felicity arising [illegible] conformity to their dictates.

tates. But I believe, Madam, a particular account of my reception and manner of life will not be disagreeable. To begin, then.

As I intended to surprize them, by arriving an hour or two sooner than they expected, I was not above five miles from the end of my journey, when I was met by Mr. Manly and my friend. We had like to have passed by each other; but Felicia happily observing the coronets on my chariot, called me by my name. I gave them a look; their door flew open; and both Lucius and she were at mine before any of our fellows had time to dismount. I was surprized, I confess, at this piece of indecorum. 'O 'the dear hoyden!' cried I to myself, and the servants stared as if they were ashamed of their insignificancy. The eyes of both my friends sparkled with pleasure; their rapidity and eagerness soothed my friendship, while my heart fluttered, and said—'To follow nature is 'the height of good-breeding.' One of my servants presently opened the door of the chariot, when I could do no less than step out to embrace them. But I shall take no notice of the endearing compliments that passed between us. Felicia's cheeks were moistened with a tender testimony of her joy. I was compelled, by friendship, to leave my woman to ride alone, and to give them my company in their own coach, in which, in a kind of triumph, they carried me to the end of our journey.

We soon arrived at the house, a large plain edifice, situated in the midst of an earthly paradise, where I found an entertainment rather hospitable and friendly than profuse and magnificent. I was welcomed with the most obliging testimonies of joy; and as they concluded that I must be weary with my journey, I was early conducted to my apartment, the most sumptuous of any in the whole building; and though there is nothing like grandeur in the furniture, there is a neatness and elegance that at first engaged my attention: every thing is, like the owner's mind, plain and beautiful. Such was the idea Felicia had given of me to her few select friends, that, from the first moment, wherever I appeared I seemed to inspire joy; their hearts were as open as their houses to receive me; and all of them actually strive who most shall contribute to make my residence in this delightful place as agreeable as possible. But, after all, you can't imagine, Madam, what a rustick creature this Felicia is grown; why, she is such a walker, I can't keep pace with her half the length of a small field. I laugh at her activity, and mimick her country stride; while she, with the greatest good-humour, ridicules my mincing step, and endeavours to put me out of conceit with some little peculiarities, which she calls affectation. Mr. Manly has, indeed, every perfection that my lovely friend has attributed to him: believe me, he has nothing of the swain but simplicity, and an artless heart; nothing of the courtier, but the unaffected ease and freedom of his behaviour; and such an esteem I have already entertained for him, that I had rather hear him talk than listen to the compliments of the finest beau in Christendom. Nay, more, I love him; love him as I should my guardian angel, were I permitted to see his person, and hear his heavenly admonitions. If it should please the Director of all events to suffer me to be safely delivered of a boy, where shall I find a tutor like him? I would not, for the world, deny him the happiness of being brought up with his son. Should I live to see the image of my dear deceased lord growing up under his care, what a sweet addition would it give to my reveries! With what pleasing sympathy should Felicia and I behold the two prattling infants daddling before us through the garden or the fields; while we, with hearts filled to the brim with maternal love and social friendship, walk slowly after, talking of refined delights, and raising our souls on the wings of heavenly affection and gratitude! The little cherubim, when lying on Felicia's lap, puts me in mind of the Venus and infant Cupid I have so often admired in my uncle's closet. I need not tell you that he is a lovely boy, when I make use of this comparison; a comparison that would wrong him, if I did not add, that it only holds good while he sleeps; for, when awake, his bright blue eyes destroy the resemblance.

The first visit I paid was to Marilla, who is the same engaging creature that Felicia has always described her: she has a good deal of learning, a great deal of fine sense, and a vast deal of that tender humanity, that unlimited goodness of heart, which, uncircumscribed by the ties of blood or the distinctions

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of religion, grasps at the happiness of every human creature. In this she resembles Lucius, to whom she is nearer allied by a kindred soul than by all the ties of nature. He considers man as man, and himself as a citizen of the world; and they both regard the whole universe, however varied by the complexion of different regions, however distinguished by religions, customs, and manners, as having a reciprocal claim to benevolence, and the kindest acts of humanity. In this visit to Mr. Manly's, I was entertained with the same affection as if I too had been married into the family: Marilla received me with open arms; and the good lady, her mamma, expressed almost as much tenderness for me as for Felicia, or her own daughter; while my friend, smiling at their caresses, seemed to set a higher value on them than on those bestowed on herself. What a difference is there, Madam, between this frank behaviour, this unreserved freedom of mind, and all the low acts of disguise, the empty formalities, the modes and forms of greatness! The openness of their countenances made it impossible for me to be under the least restraint. In an hour's time I was as free and intimate with every one of them as Felicia herself; I told them I knew all their affairs, and enquired of Marilla, whether she was yet inclined to admit the addresses of Felicia's cousin? She reddened a little; but immediately replied, that was it possible for her to be in love with a vicious man, let his person and behaviour be ever so engaging, she would never admit of his addresses; since this would be to hazard both present and eternal happiness: that, in this case, it would be her duty to do violence to her heart, and, by a glorious effort, endeavour to conquer herself; how then could she ever think of being so nearly united to a man whom, though she would not despise, she could never love!

'But,' said Mr. Manly with a smile, 'my daughter has another motive to refuse him, which, notwithstanding the extraordinary frankness of her temper, she has had the art to conceal. A young clergyman, nearly related to Mr. Stevens, is lately returned into this part of the country, where he has obtained a small living; but, though his circumstances are but very indifferent, he has every other qualification that can recommend him to my daughter. He was last week accidentally in her company; and I am informed that she has made a conquest which she cannot but approve. I had this information from Felicia's cousin, who makes a great merit of the discovery; and says, that though the clergyman despairs of ever obtaining her, and has declared that he shall never have the presumption to attempt it, yet, in his opinion, I ought to watch her close, lest she should be prevailed upon to throw herself away.'

During this speech, Marilla had a constraint and awkwardness in her air, which shewed her at a loss how to behave; but she was soon relieved by Felicia, who, after expressing some indignation against her cousin, asked if the gentleman was not educated at Cambridge. Mr. Manly answered, that he heard so. On which she told him, that she had once the honour of his company with Mr. Stevens, Lucius, her aunt, and Amelia, in a visit they paid at my *Lord M****'s; that she was greatly pleased with his conversation, and believed him to be a gentleman of uncommon merit. It was easy to see that Marilla did not hear this encomium with indifference, though she had the presence of mind instantly to change the subject.

Marilla, who had yet, as she told us afterwards, no more than a high opinion of the merit of this reverend gentleman, an esteem which rather encreased than disturbed the tranquillity of her mind, had soon a very favourable opportunity to see if it was worthily placed. She had no difficulties to encounter with; her father, and every one of the family, were devoted to her happiness. Mr. Manly, disgusted with the follies of life, rejoiced at the prospect of disposing of his daughter to a person of intrinsick worth; he only wanted to know if his information was well founded, and this he easily accomplished. He invited Mr. Stevens and the clergyman to dine with him; and blotting out the name of the young esquire, shewed them the letter as a mean attempt to injure them in his esteem. The modest clergyman, struck with confusion, trem-

* See Letter VIII.

bled, and confeſſed the truth; at the ſame time aſſuring him, with many proteſtations, that though it was true he loved Marilla, he never had the preſumption to aſpire to the leaſt hope; and that, whatever had been the conſequence, he had reſolved never to mention it to her. But Mr. Manly interrupted him, by letting him know that he was not diſpleaſed; that he had a very great eſteem for him; and though his daughter's fortune would be now very conſiderable, the diſproportion could not be great, ſince he did not doubt, if virtue, piety, and good ſenſe, would do, but that in time he would wear the mitre; and that, if he could gain his daughter's affection, he would be no obſtacle to their union.

You muſt not expect, Madam, that I ſhould here deſcribe his rapture, or tell the wiſe and ſilly things he ſaid and did. He was in a moment raiſed from deſpair almoſt to the poſſeſſion of his higheſt wiſhes: if, then, he did not behave at this inſtant like a madman, or a fool, I ſhould have no opinion either of his love or his wiſdom. However, he was introduced to Marilla, who received him with the deference due to his merit: he ſaw her every day; and ſhe every day becoming more ſenſible of his value, in about ſix weeks time they were married.

The young ſquire, though he had no great reaſon to hope, could not bear to loſe the poſſibility of obtaining her, much leſs to ſee her in the poſſeſſion of another; and, therefore, as if his reformation had been only a pretence, threw it aſide, as being now of no ſervice to him. He curſed her and himſelf; ſtormed like a madman; ſwore to abandon himſelf to every vice; went out, and got ſo drunk, that he was obliged to be carried home; and the next day was ſeized with a fever, from which he recovered with difficulty. The idea of the immediate approach of death filled his mind with horrors not to be expreſſed. Dreadful, indeed, were the conflicts of his deſpair; but theſe were at laſt removed by prayer and penitential tears; and, indeed, this ſickneſs ſeems to have produced a real reformation. He is but juſt recovered, and may now live, and yet be no diſgrace to his family; he may have a juſt claim to the complacency of his friends; and may ariſe as high as his capacity will ſuffer him, to the degree of an honeſt huſband, perhaps a plodding country ſquire, and a well-meaning juſtice of the quorum.

My whole attention is to contribute, by an eaſy chearfulneſs and good-humour, to the ſatisfaction of a narrow circle of friends, and to furniſh freſh matter for their amuſement. It is their taſk to improve, mine only to divert. Marilla, who has not yet retired to her new habitation, graces our little ſociety more frequently than before her marriage; and with her comes the agreeable youth who has the honour of her neareſt friendſhip. I want words to expreſs the height of their felicity: he, as well as Lucius and Felicia, is conſidered by Mr. and Mrs. Manly as the pride of their little family, as their happineſs and glory. I hardly ever knew a man of finer ſenſe or more generous ſentiments; I could not have imagined that a perſon could be found ſo nearly reſembling Lucius.

It is now, Madam, that I begin to live, to know myſelf, and to know the human mind, which in this place appears ſtripped of every diſguiſe. True felicity dwells here; here is peace and joy. I taſte the delight of the moſt ſprightly and improving converſation; I read, I give a full ſcope to my reflections; and theſe employments alternately fill up my time. I ſometimes venture to walk out alone, and, wrapt in ſober contemplation, trace the hidden receſſes of my own heart.

Would you believe it? I am grown a very enthuſiaſt. I fall in raptures at the lovely face of nature. And were you to ſee me, when I walk in the garden, or in the adjacent fields; or when, to enlarge the landſcape, I view from the turret the wide proſpect ſtretching in a long level till it mingles with the clouds; were you, in theſe moments, to hear my rhapſodies, and be a witneſs of my extravagances; even you, with all your partiality for me, would be tempted to think me mad. But, perhaps, you are not far from thinking me ſo at preſent: however, it is beſt to conclude while I have room to aſſure you, that I have the honour to be your ladyſhip's moſt ſincere friend,

CHARLOTTE.

THE END.

THE

ADVENTURES

OF

MR. GEORGE EDWARDS,

A CREOLE.

BY SIR JOHN HILL.

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M DCC LXXXVIII.

PREFACE.

IT has been too much a cuſtom among the modern writers of romance, to expoſe perſons inſtead of vices or follies; and to draw from real life the characters of a work, the very plan and intent of which beſpeaks it fiction. Where the Author has been honeſt enough to avoid this; or where, from a more juſt idea of the nature of the thing he ſets about, he has been under no temptation to fall into a procedure that has no real connection with it; the world has too often executed the ill-natured office for him, and has conſtrued that into perſonal abuſe which he intended as general admonition. In this caſe, the crime is theirs who apply, not his who has happened to write what was capable of application; as, indeed, every general cenſure muſt neceſſarily be more or leſs ſo, if founded on foibles that really exiſt.

Under theſe diſadvantages, an Author who publiſhes a piece of this kind can do no more than enter his caveat againſt ſuch treatment of his works. It is with great ſerioufneſs that the writer of theſe Adventures declares, that there is in the world no ſuch perſon as the hero of them, or as any other character deſcribed in them: the perſons are all, ſo far at leaſt, Tom Jones's and Clariſſa's. Reſemblances there are, which may, perhaps, in ſome parts of them, in ſome degree fit certain particular perſons; but they are intended as characters of various vices, follies, &c. and not as deſcriptions of particular perſons.

In this light only the Author gives them to the world; declaring that he means no particular perſon by any of them, nor knows any perſon to whom any one of them can with juſtice be appropriated. After this, if any body chuſes to apply them, or to charge all the foibles deſcribed under any of them on any private perſon who may happen to be poſſeſſed of ſome one of them, the cenſure ought to fall where the fault lies, that is, on him who forces the words into a ſenſe the Author never intended to expreſs by them.

THE

THE

ADVENTURES

OF

MR. GEORGE EDWARDS,

A CREOLE.

BOOK THE FIRST.

CONTAINING ABOUT AS MUCH BUSINESS AS THE FIRST ACT OF A COMEDY.

CHAP. I.

THE HISTORY OF A PERSON WHO WILL BE OF USE TO US HEREAFTER.

WHOEVER has had occaſion to viſit the lower part of Scotland Yard, muſt have obſerved an obſcure door-way, long ſince diveſted of the apparatus with which it once was capable of being ſhut; and at preſent ſerving only to diſcover a dark paſſage, the nightly ſcene of many a tender courtſhip. At the extremity of this duſky entrance appears, behind the barrier of a ſpiked hatch, the triple-bolted gate of the very eminent and amiable Mr. Jeremy Edwards.

The apartment was originally deſtined to the ſervice of one of the lower domeſticks of the archbiſhop of Canterbury. It belonged to a ſett of rooms of old allotted for the reception of that prelate and his retinue, if at any time the buſineſs of the Privy Council ſhould detain him later at St. James's than the proper hours for his croſſing the water. The tranquillity of our country has now rendered late councils unneceſſary; and the apartments, in leſs happy times appointed to ſuch uſes, have been a long while alienated from their original proprietor. The humble part of them, which is to be the ſcene of much buſineſs in the ſucceeding hiſtory, had been ſome years before given, by a perſon of faſhion, to a diſcarded footman, whoſe unmannerly demand for wages my Lord had not been in a humour to comply with juſt at that time; and from this perſon, who had ventured to borrow on that fund, and the additional joint ſecurity of a neighbouring tradeſman, about a twentieth part of the ſum of our Mr. Edwards, the apartment, after the diſmiſſing the friend to the Marſhalſea, and obtaining an agreement of the repayment of the ſum by weekly portions of one and ſixpence each from the principal, devolved, by way of ſecurity, to the creditor.

Mr. Edwards, who was a man of great prudence and œconomy, found many reaſons for being pleaſed with his new habitation. He grew ſo fond of it, indeed, after a few weeks, that he had

the generosity, in consideration of an assignment of it in form, together with another of a due proportion of the debt, from the noble donor, to acquit the principal in the obligation; and, at the same time, to release also his friend from the prison, on condition of his entering into the weekly engagement in the other's place, and bringing some responsible person to promise that he should keep up to his payments more regularly than the other had done.

That his habitation was situated within the verge of the court, a place privileged from the danger of arrests, could be, indeed, a circumstance of no consequence to Mr. Edwards; who, conscious that the advantage of buying with ready money was more than adequate to the highest interest, never made any debts: but he did not lose the consideration of it's being in a neighbourhood where almost every body wanted money so heartily as to be glad of it on any terms. Additionally to this, it's consisting only of one room rendered it less expensive in point of furniture; and the difficulty of finding the way to it gave him sufficient ground for hopes that his common acquaintance, if he had not yet been able entirely to get rid of such people, would not think it worth while to search him out there; and that only those, by whom he was to get something, would give him the trouble of opening his door for their admittance.

As the gentle reader is seldom content with an account of the life and actions of a great man, unless he is also informed of certain other less essential circumstances in regard to him, we shall comply so far with the custom established from time immemorial, by authors of the class to which we flatter ourselves this egregious work will declare we have the honour to belong, as to inform the world that Mr. Jeremy Edwards, the subject of our present relation, was a man of five feet, nine inches, and three quarters high; his age about sixty-seven; his person meagre; his countenance sallow, and deeply wrinkled; his eyes far sunk in their sockets, but carrying the constant marks of an uncommon scrutiny and discernment in them; and his beard a sable, silvered: it's colour, indeed, was usually more distinguishable on a Saturday than at other times, as on that day it was ordinarily about one third of an inch in length.

His habit was always mourning; that kind of dress, beside it's peculiar gravity, having the advantages of being bought cheapest at second-hand, and requiring the least expensive paraphernalia in sword, buckles, and the other common appendages. His wig was a tye, which, beside the advantage it enjoyed, in common with the coat, of gravity, and an appearance of importance without expence; by drawing the two tyes together in a knot under his chin at bed-time, very comfortably served in the place, and saved the expence of night-caps.

His meals were temperate, and were indeed one less in number than most people's; the physicians having persuaded him, as he had listened to their discourse at the coffee-house, that suppers were unwholesome. His hours were early, for he had long taught himself to cheat life of all that time which could not be enjoyed without the expence of fire and candle. His mornings were employed in looking over his accounts, and at his devotions; the Park took up his noon; and, from the time of his dinner to that of his retiring to his repose, he might be always found at Will's Coffee-house, where he got law from the loquacious Mr. Tongue as cheap as he did physick from the debates of the very eminent Dr. Greek and Dr. Cane; and where, after picking up the news of the day in the same manner, without joining in any conversation, he employed the rest of the tedious period in reading, one after another, all the daily and the weekly papers.

The coffee at these houses always gave him the head-ache; the tea, he observed, made him low-spirited; and, as for chocolate, he could never sleep after it: in consequence of this, he never drank any thing in this time but two glasses of water, which the waiters brought to him, without being called upon, at stated periods; and he paid quarterly at the bar, at the rate of three-pence halfpenny per week, for house-room.

The companion of this gentleman's retirement was a female of the name of Ruth, who had been taught to think she had great reason to applaud his tenderness for her, though she had no knowledge of what was her real connection with him.

Mrs. Ruth, who, at the period at which our history commences, was about six and

and twenty, had been bred up under her master's eye from an infant. His acquaintance with her had commenced some time before her birth. Her mother, who unfortunately was never married, with how much justice we shall not pretend to say, had sworn the fruit of her unlawful amusements to him; and he had taken the child very early under his immediate protection, from a consideration that it was easy to maintain her at home, at a smaller expence than he must be at abroad for her; and that she might very soon be employed so as to make her rather a profit than an expence to him.

Upon this plan the little Ruth was very early instructed in the making cabbage-nets and purses: from thence she went through the whole round of employments since idly pretended to have been invented for the children of the Foundling Hospital; and was of so towardly and industrious a disposition, that, by the age of seven years, she more than paid for her food and raiment. From that time she became serviceable to her guardian also in a farther capacity. He had been, till then, accustomed to pay one of the nymphs of the yard at the rate of five-pence weekly, for employing an hour every morning in the cleaning his apartment. The little Ruth now became able, at her leisure hours, to take off that expence; and, in fine, the old gentleman, whose temperate life had preserved to his late period that vigour which the modern polite world usually deplore the loss of at three-and-thirty, a few years after found means to place the gentle Ruth in the stead of the evening damsels of the Park, and to save himself the only three half-pences he had for many years been capable of accusing as extravagant and unnecessary.

CHAP. II.

IN THE STYLE AND MANNER, THOUGH WITHOUT THE TERMS, OF HERALDRY.

WRITERS in the Epick, whether in poetry or prose, have generally taken care to deduce the person whom they select for their hero from high and noble lineage. In antient days, when Gods were more numerous, as well as more familiar, with the good people of this world, than men will be brought to believe they are at this time, an author hardly thought a man qualified to cut two or three people's throats, unless he had a deity, male or female, for his parent, or, at the farthest, for his ancestor. In after times, when the inhabitants of the upper regions made fewer visits among us, kings and emperors were still in being; and the author, if he could not find the way to deduce the principal in his story legitimately from one or other of these people, seldom or never failed of paying his mother's chastity the compliment of introducing somebody of this sort to the inmost recesses of it, just three quarters of a year before his birth.

There is great difference, however, between romance and history. The former, as it sets out in utter defiance of truth, and commonly of reason too, may make it's own way to the magnificent; the latter, as it is nothing, if not founded on facts, is tied down to much narrower limits.

All this we have judged necessary to prefix to our introducing the hero of this our history to the reader's acquaintance; as he was indeed a descendant of a family, of which the gentleman, a sketch of whose character has furnished out the preceding chapter, was not the least honourable branch.

The love of money, and the care to improve it, seem to have been hereditary virtues in the Mr. Jeremy Edwards already celebrated. His father, a person ever attached to it in the closest manner, had, in the course of his application, often fallen upon particular methods, which over-scrupulous people might have called exceptionable; and having, on one unlucky occasion, carried these a little too far, he subjected himself to a catastrophe which threatened to put a period to every hope of his succeeding in it again.

Mr. Thomas Edwards, for such was this gentleman's name, had been originally a foot-boy to an humble merchant in one of the dirty streets behind St. Paul's. This gentleman had received him so young from the country, that he either had very little idea of his parents or relations, or had the prudence to conceal who they were, by pretending so. The reader's curiosity, therefore, as to the origin of the family of the Edwards's,

though a very juſt and laudable one, muſt neceſſarily remain unſatisfied from this our hiſtory.

The fortunes of Mr. Thomas's maſter had been continually improving while he lived in his ſervice, and his own had improved with them. From foot-boy he became at length butler; and, in this capacity, ſerved till the age of thirty-ſix, at which period his maſter died, after having for ſome years ſpent a great part of his time at his villa near Highgate, and left the management of his affairs in town to his old and faithful ſervant. Mr. Thomas had ſo well profited of his confidence during the latter part of his ſervice, that he now found himſelf worth three hundred pounds, beſide a conſiderable legacy bequeathed him for his faithful ſervices.

With this ſtock, amounting in the whole to five hundred and fifty pounds, he ſet up as a reputable trader. He had ſo well informed himſelf of all the common methods of gain during the period of his ſerving the maker of his fortune, that in a few years he raiſed his capital to five times it's original value, and was in a way to have made a very fair fortune, when having been unhappily diſcovered in promoting the ſtripping the houſe of a perſon of ſome conſequence while the family were in the country, and buying the plunder at a fifth part of it's value, the cataſtrophe already hinted at very ſuddenly ſhifted the ſcene to one of his Majeſty's plantations.

Previouſly to this unfortunate event, Mr. Edwards had been ſome years married; but as this alliance had not at all tended to the aggrandizing his fortune, or ennobling his progeny, we have not judged it neceſſary to take any more notice of it before, than the huſband himſelf did afterwards. He had found means of ſending this lady off with the greateſt part of his fortune, ſome days before his trial, with inſtructions to follow him with it after his tranſportation, as he was well informed this muſt be the ſentence; but, by ſome malevolent fate or other, he had the ill luck to find himſelf diſappointed in this particular, and arrived in the colony he was deſtined to alone, and a beggar. After having ſerved as long an apprenticeſhip in this new world to one miſtreſs, as Jacob did for both his, he at length married her; and, finding means to get rid of her in a year or two afterwards, he ſat down, in the ſeventeenth year of his exile, maſter of a much better fortune than that he had left behind him.

The lady by whoſe death Mr. Edwards became poſſeſſed of this new eſtabliſhment, had borne him a ſon during the laſt year of his ſervitude, an event which perhaps had not a little facilitated his more honourable engagements. From this ſon, who afterwards married the only daughter of a neighbouring planter, and by that means joined two very conſiderable eſtates which lay contiguous, deſcended Mr. George Edwards, the hero of our future ſtory.

Mrs. Edwards, whom we have before mentioned as left in England, with injunctions of following her huſband to his new place of reſidence, finding herſelf poſſeſſed of ſo conſiderable a fortune as two thouſand pounds, had taken the advice of her friends, and reſolved not to croſs the ſalt ſeas after a huſband who was little better than a rogue neither: ſhe immediately threw herſelf into buſineſs, in a trade that has no other requiſite but caſh; namely, that of a pawnbroker; and though ſhe did not think it ſafe to marry, as ſhe could not be aſſured of her former huſband's not returning, ſhe very prudently took a ſpruce journeyman into her family, who tranſacted the buſineſs of her ſhop, and by whom ſhe had a ſon, the Jeremy Edwards of our preceding chapter; for, having no legal title to his father's name, he was always called by that of his mother.

The improvement of money was a virtue derived therefore to Mr. Jeremy from his anceſtors on every ſide: he no ſooner was able to write, than he became of uſe in the ſhop; and by the age of fifteen was ſuch a proficient in the buſineſs, that he was judged able to manage it entirely, under the direction of his mother; and, as that lady had now no farther ſervice for her journeyman, the poor fellow was turned out of doors to ſtarve, as the drones are from the hive by the reſt of the bees, after they have laid the foundation for a ſucceeding generation; the only end for which the females of more ſpecies than the inſect kind ſuppoſe thoſe of the other ſex to have been formed.

The mother of Mr. Jeremy lived to ſee him in his forty-eighth year; at which

which period she bid good-bye to this troublesome life, full of years and satisfaction, leaving her son in possession of the whole fortune; which when he had sold off the pledges, and got all together, he found amount to more than eight thousand pounds. With this stock he quitted the business he had been bred to, and retired to the cell in which the reader found him at the setting out of this history. He there found the way to make a profitable use of it, by lending money to people who, having no real security to leave for it, were obliged to be content with worse conditions as to interest, than those which the injudicious and censorious world call exorbitant, in the trade of the pawnbroker.

If thou shouldst imagine, gentle reader, that we have been somewhat perplexed and intricate in the conduct of this chapter, we are to remind thee that, while deducing genealogies, it becomes us to write like genealogists: and we give thee this notice in good time, to prevent surprize or censure, that thou shalt find, through the course of this our work, we will be dull, be obscure, be impertinent, be any thing in the world, rather than be out of character.

CHAP. III.

WHICH IF THE GENTLE READER CHUSES TO CALL THE FIRST OF THIS HISTORY, HE HAS OUR FREE LEAVE.

MR. George Edwards, the son of Captain Nicholas Edwards, the descendant of the great Thomas Edwards, Esq; and allied by marriage to the family of Major James Williams, descendant of the honourable Colonel Williams, (for every man in these islands is as naturally a colonel as every German is a baron) was a fine tall boy, for a Creole very handsome, the immediate heir to an immense fortune; and was by every body allowed to be a gentleman of one of the best and antientest families in the island.

He was, at the period at which our history commences, barely nineteen: he had been bred at home with an indulgent mother, among a family of slaves, under the command of a father who had very little less pride, and much more tyranny, than Alexander the Great; and he was accordingly as proud as peevish, and as insolent as indulgence and bad example could render him. He had, however, many amiable qualities at bottom: he was generous to profusion; so compassionate, that his but coming in the way of the punishment of a negro, was a certain reprieve to the wretch; and so naturally open and ingenuous in his disposition, that no consideration was ever able to make him deny, or even but disguise his thoughts.

It has been an observation of the moral writers who have not been for allowing too much merit to human nature, that many of our virtues are the produce of our pride. Certain it is, that this openness of temper in our hero was grounded on his holding himself too high for disingenuity, and knowing his own rank too well to suppose there was any body he need condescend to conceal his thoughts from; but we are not able to discover that his ingenuity was less a virtue for this, or even that this pride was criminal. If every man would remember on all occasions his own rank; or, if he have none in civil life, the very dignity of his nature; it would prevent his descending to a thousand things that himself has occasion to be ashamed of, and his friends and acquaintance to be sorry for.

Among other it's good dispositions, the heart of Master George was very open to love: he was in a country where there were very few objects for such a passion, and where, unfortunately, there was one so much superior to the rest in person and accomplishments, and so vastly inferior to himself in point of fortune, that she at once rendered it impossible for a person of his turn either to think of any body else or of herself.

The young gentleman had struggled against a tenderness for this lady from a very early period of his life: but his pride, added to his father's frequent and earnest admonitions against it, had at length got the better of every thought that would have hurt his interest; when falling in one day at her father's plantation, on a familiar visit, he found the young lady in tears; the unlicked son of a neighbour planter soliciting her in very coarse, and hardly civil terms; and the father seconding his suit with the common threats and promises on

these

these occasions of immediate beggary if he refused, and of his utmost penny if she would comply.

The common benevolence of our hero's temper would have led him to plead in the lady's favour on such an occasion, had he wanted another motive; but his own honour seemed, according to his high sense of it, to be in some degree also concerned in the case. Though he had never opened his lips to the lady on a love-story, he could not but look on this youngster as a sort of rival; and very justly condemning him as unworthy the woman he dared to solicit in such a manner, he told him, somewhat roughly, these were not the methods to gain a heart that was of any value, and that no hand was worth accepting without one. 'I applaud the lady's refusal of you,' continued he; 'and should do so though 'you had my fortune. And, Mr. 'Wentworth,' says he, addressing himself to the father, 'let me prevail with 'you to pardon Miss July, and dismiss 'her lover. You know nothing of her 'worth, Sir, if you imagine she can't 'command a better match than this at 'any time. Nay,' concluded he, with some earnestness, 'I'll tax my own estate 'with the price of all that follows, if 'you find reason to repent taking my 'advice.'

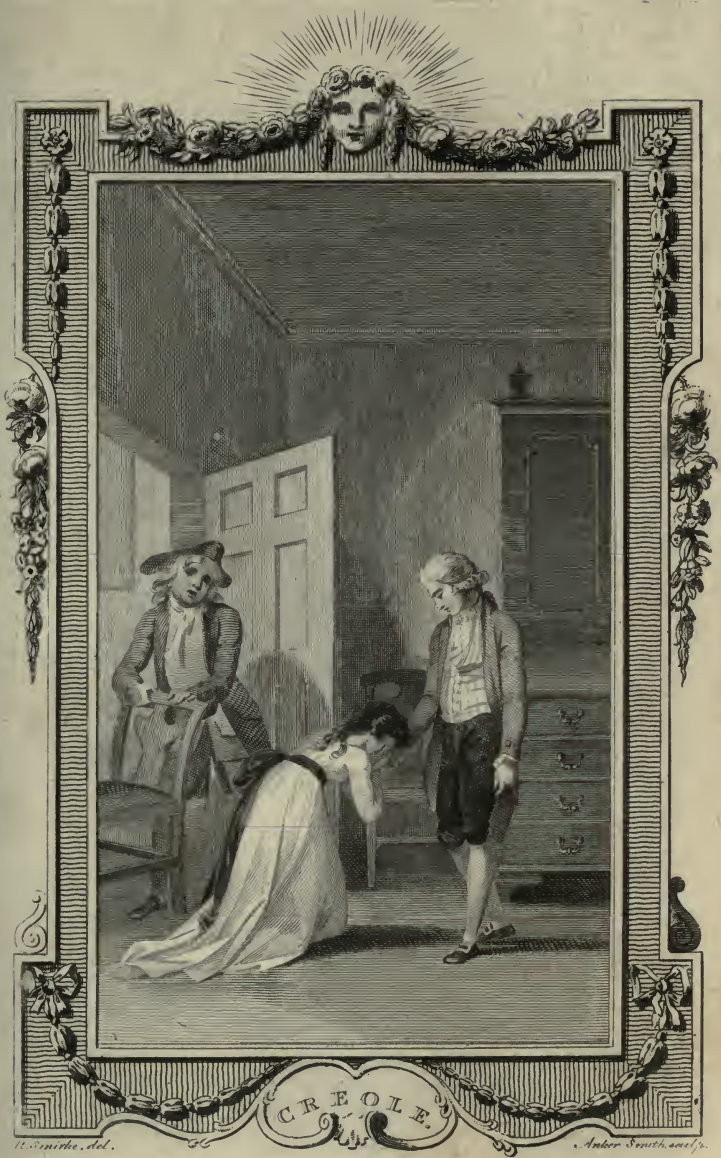
The father consented, and the lover had his final dismission; while the young lady, who paid no more attention to that circumstance than to the compliments her father was making Master Edwards, threw herself at his feet; and seizing his hand with a rapturous eagerness, washed it with a profusion of those tears which he had intended not to provoke, but to dry up. It was some minutes before she spoke: at length—'O Sir!' says she, 'wherefore am I to be more undone by 'you than I could have been even by 'him? Why this additional claim to 'that esteem, that adoration, you had 'from me before? I would not tell you, 'that to have lived with him were less 'than to despair of you: I would not 'tell you this, but that I know to be 'what I am, and to despair of you, is 'but one thing.' Here a fresh torrent of distress interrupted her for some moments: at length, recovering her voice, and still eagerly pressing his hand—'Pardon,' says she, 'sweetest, greatest, 'perfectest of God's images! pardon a 'frankness my soul has learned from 'yours! I cannot dissemble with the 'man who, I see, esteems me, though 'he dares not love me: and, with the 'same truth with which I own this to 'you, I tell you,' concluded she, 'I 'would not listen to a passion that, while 'it made me blessed, would make you 'miserable.'

Our hero had stood, during this interesting period, motionless as a statue, with his eyes fixed upon the ground: the lady still retained her posture, but her head now sunk, through mere fatigue of soul, upon his hand; and the father stood at a little distance staring, and, with open mouth and vacant countenance, seeming at once to swallow the whole discourse, and digest no syllable of it. He was by much the most at ease of the three; and therefore it was natural enough that he should break the silence. 'I don't know what she means by all 'this outlandish talk, not I,' says he: 'tis what she reads, I suppose, out of 'the play-books your people a lent her. 'But you might take her off of her 'knees, howsomdever, one wou'd think, 'Squire, thof' you be so much above 'her.'

Certain it is, that neither had the lady recollected her own situation, nor he that she continued in it, till this admonition. He raised her with great tenderness; and, throwing his arms about her, imprinted on her cold lips a kiss that gave them life and warmth again: he looked earnestly on her; and, after a pause of some moments, uttered with great agitation of mind—'Would there were any thing 'proper for me to say to you!' And burst from her without ceremony.

The father stared after him for some time; and then, turning about, told his daughter peevishly—'A mote a said 'good by t'ye, dog, howsomdever, a 'body would think. Zw——s! what an 'he be so rich, you and I are Christians, 'sure, as well as he, an't we?' The girl was silent; she knew there were circumstances under which it were poor to descend to forms: she retired to repose a moment in her apartment; as the reader may also do, if he pleases, after so busy a scene, before we lead him into a new chapter.

CHAP.



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CHAP. IV.

THE BUSINESS OF WHICH THE READER WANTS EITHER PENETRATION, OR A GOOD OPINION OF US, IF HE CANNOT GUESS WITHOUT OUR ASSISTANCE.

THOUGH our hero was sensible there was nothing for him to say to the lady, who had so frankly disclosed her heart to him, he knew full well that there was a person to whom he had much to declare on the subject. He immediately returned home; and, telling his father he had something of importance to say, retired with him to his closet.

'I have been, Sir,' says he, 'at our 'neighbour Wentworth's.' The father's colour changed at the name. 'I 'have prevented,' continues he, 'that 'brute of a parent from sacrificing his 'daughter to the arms of Will Stanley.' —'And what business—' the father was beginning to exclaim with great earnestness and vociferation. 'Sir,' says the son, 'with great sedateness, I begged 'you to hear me; if you refuse it, I 'have done.' The father, with some difficulty, bridled both his passion and his voice; and the youth proceeded— 'There is not a thought in my heart 'that I would condescend to disguise 'even to you: I do not love the girl; 'I have already been at the pains of 'conquering the first attacks of that 'passion. As I do not love her, I am 'an unprejudiced judge in my own 'cause; and I confess to you, Sir, that 'I am so much convinced of the superiority of the qualifications she pos'sesses to the advantages of fortune, that, 'if I can prevail with you to think in 'the same manner, I will marry her: 'without your approbation, I will never 'do either that, or any thing of conse'quence.'

'Thee art mad and bewitched, lad, 'for certain!' exclaims the father; 'they 'have put love-powder in thy punch, or 'some d——d trick o'that fashions! 'Marry a draggle-tail'd wench, with'out a half penny! Why, thee mayst 'marry a dutchess, boy! Thee must go 'to England, child, to look after a wife 'for thee; there's no body upon the 'island worthy to untie thy cravat. 'Why, child, thee dost'nt know thyself! 'Call thee proud, quotha!'

To an infinite deal more matter of this kind, which made it's way from the good man in an uninterruptible torrent, the youth very coolly answered—'I asked 'your approbation only, Sir; I know 'you are the best judge whether you 'ought to give it; and I am content 'with your refusal: you shall hear no 'more of this; nor will I think any 'more of it.'

The father shook him by the hand, told him he was an honest, good lad, and he wished he had ten times as much for his sake; and after bidding him, whatever he did, never demean himself in marriage, walked whistling away to his sugar-house. The youth took three or four hasty turns about the room, then sat down to the escritore, and wrote to the lady in the following terms.

'MADAM,

'I Left you abruptly an hour ago, be'cause I had no right to propose to 'you what I knew another must deter'mine for me. I have asked my fa'ther's permission to offer myself to you 'as a lover; he has refused it; and I 'shall never disobey him. I will not 'give you pain by picturing to you what 'I feel on this occasion; it is more 'friendly to tell you, that love is a pas'sion you may conquer. It is long 'since I had got the entire mastery over 'a tenderness I much earlier conceived 'for you: this accident only revived 'those thoughts; and reflection, as it 'cannot warrant, will again subdue, 'them.

'If this has been possible, in regard 'to a passion that had you for it's ob'ject, doubt not but it will be easy to 'make any other fall to it. I am, 'Madam, your very obedient, humble 'servant,

'GEORGE EDWARDS.'

The lady had not imagined there would be such an application in her favour. She never felt the loss of her lover so severely as now that she knew how much he was so. She read his letter over and over: she saw the coldness of the stile was affected; but she honoured him for the affectation. 'O generous youth!' says she, 'thou knowest, indeed, the 'spirit

'spirit of this passion; thou disdainest 'to employ a power thou hast to make 'me wretched! But know, I must be 'more miserable for that thou disdainest 'to wish me so. In this only thou art 'deceived, that thou supposest love may 'be conquered. I know it not but for 'thee; but, whilst thou art it's object, 'coldness were as impossible as incon-'stancy!'

After some more soliloquies of this kind, she threw herself upon the bed, refused comfort of all kinds, even food, and pined in two days into a very dangerous disorder.

The physician of the place (a man who had been an apothecary in London, till his idleness and debauchery, added to his ignorance, had ruined him there; and who, now in a new world, and with a new character, dispatched more to the shades than any ten of his former trade in England) did not find himself able to discover, by the symptoms, what the disease of the patient was; but every body about her joining in assuring him it was owing to love, he acquiesced in it. He very gravely told the father, that Galenical medicines would be of no efficacy in this case; for that Hippocrates, the father of physick, had left it among his writings, that—

'*Amor nullis est medicabilis herbis*;'

and therefore chymical remedies were the only ones that could be proper, as being principally drawn from the mineral kingdom.

The father could not but submit to the opinion of a man so well acquainted with Hippocrates; and the daughter, though she saw she was doomed a sacrifice to the ignorance of her doctor, was indifferent enough about life to acquire the character of a sweet-tempered, tractable girl, that took her medicines as regularly as if they had been sweetmeats.

The only care of Miss July was, indeed, that Mr. Edwards should not know of her illness. She was sensible it would have the appearance of an artifice, which her soul was very much above; and though in so talking a place as that where she resided, where so little new presented itself at any time that a cut-finger was matter of news for a fortnight, it was impossible, for all her cautions and entreaties, absolutely to prevent it's reaching his ears: she contrived to throw people continually in his way, who were instructed to tell him they had just met her in the fields, or drank tea with her at home; so that, notwithstanding all the harangues of the doctor, he became convinced her indisposition was not of consequence enough to make either him or herself uneasy.

CHAP. V.

A TREATY SET ON FOOT BETWEEN THE FATHER OF OUR HERO AND UNCLE JEREMY. A VOYAGE TO ENGLAND.

PEOPLE who have but few relations, generally take sufficient pains, unless they are poor ones, to find them out. It was now many years since the father of our hero had traced back his genealogy so far as to know that he had a relation, as he called him, on the mother's side, somewhere in London. He had been at the pains of enquiring, by means of the masters of several vessels that traded backwards and forwards from their port to that of London, so far as to satisfy himself of this gentleman's existence and his circumstances, and had waited with christian patience the periods of many voyages for an explanation. He no sooner found, however, that he was in being, and was a close, rich fellow, than he wrote to him, with all the politeness a West Indian education could inspire, to give him an account of his family and affairs, and entreat an acquaintance with the only relation he had in the world.

Mr. Jeremy Edwards was as slow and as cautious in all his motions as the gentleman who had claimed kindred with him. It was seven months before he discovered whether the letter he received was of consequence enough to pay it's postage; and an equal period elapsed during the necessary enquiries, as to the situation and connections of the writer of it: circumstances which the judicious Jeremy never took a man's own word about.

At the end of this time, it appearing that Mr. Thomas Edwards had a fortune; that there was but one life between that fortune and the said Jeremy; and that a life, which, if he could get the owner of it to London, would not be worth above a year and a half's purchase; he wrote to his dear brother, as he

he called him, to inform him of the joy it had been to him to receive his letter; adding, that himself was declining apace; and that he thought Providence had, in this occurrence, pointed out to him whom he should make the heir of the little Heaven had blessed him with; that he was rejoiced to hear how discreet and good a lad his nephew was; and that, as he never yet had known so near a relation, he extremely wished to have the happiness of seeing him before he died: concluding that, as London was the proper place for the education of a young man who was to make a figure in the world, he was not without hope of sometime giving him his blessing there.

Uncle Jeremy was, from the receipt of this letter, looked on as the patron of the rising branch of the family. The young gentleman was every where called his heir; and, as Fame never fails to expand her tidings in proportion to the space she carries them through, this certainty was, on that side the water, never calculated at less than a hundred and fifty thousand pounds addition to his fortune.

In this situation were the affairs of the family, when the young gentleman had proposed to his father the taking Miss Wentworth for a wife. Mr. Edwards's own circumstances were vastly superior to those of that lady's parent; but the addition expected from the uncle set the youth so infinitely above the level with such a family, that his father would have thought it as proper for a prince of the blood to marry a scullion, as for his son, and the heir of his brother, to condescend to look upon the daughter of a poor planter.

His utter disapprobation had put a final period to the lover's intentions; and the lady had reconciled it to herself to lose him, when our hero, having employed a young negro wench of the next plantation on some trivial message, and, almost accidentally, asked her at her return if she had seen her young mistress that day, found, by that unguarded innocent, that the doctor had given her over two days, and that his ignorance of her situation had been owing to her care of having it kept from him.

Young Edwards had a heart too sensible and too generous not to feel the present circumstance as it ought, as well as too open and ingenuous to conceal it's sentiments. He ran immediately to his father—'This generous young creature, Sir, is dying for me, and has 'industriously concealed it from my 'knowledge: if you have compassion or 'humanity—nay, if you have but justice—do not make me accessary to the 'death of one who loves me, and who, 'if you would judge disinterestedly, 'you would own more than deserves 'me. You say I must not marry her, 'because my fortune is immensely great, 'and hers is nothing; it is therefore, 'Sir, that I should marry her: less than 'what I shall have would be more than 'enough; and what could I, what 'ought my father to wish more, than 'to confer an obligation on one who 'has it in her power to return it a thousand fold, to make me happy for ever? 'Can I suffer her to die in misery, who 'wishes nothing but to make me live in 'happiness?'

'Why,' replies the father, 'as for 'your marrying her, George, for the 'matter of that, I should not be so 'much against it if I was sure as how 'she would die for certain within this 'day or two; for, so far as that goes, 'I would not wish her to die miserable, 'as you say, no more nor yourself: but 'as for that doctor, you know ever since 'a told me as how Dobbin was only 'lazy, and the poor thing died in the 'mill but three quarters of an hour 'afterwards, I'm resolved never to take 'his word about any soul's life or death 'again. Besides all that, women are 'deceitful, as every body knows; and, 'mahap, this is no more nor a trick; 'and she'll no sooner a got you fast, but 'she'll jump out a bed, and tell you as 'how she'll live to make your heart 'ache.'

'Sir,' replies the youth, with great earnestness, 'I have promised to obey 'you; you cannot ask more of me: but 'I will not hear an unhappy creature, 'one whom I have made so, treated with 'this cruelty, while she is dying for me.' He was going on with great impetuosity, when the old man stopped him, by telling him they had things of more consequence to talk about. 'Captain Jer-'vas,' says he, 'sails o' Tuesday: you 'know well enough how much your 'uncle Jeremy has longed to see you; 'now's your time to go. There's no-

'thing in the varſal world ſo good as a 'voyage to England to cure a love-fit: 'beſides, if you deſign to make a man 'of yourſelf, now's your time, while 'you are young, to do it.'

The youth ſtarted at the propoſal; but the father inſiſted on his compliance. His unwillingneſs, the ſource of which it was very eaſy to ſee, made the father the more reſolute. An implicit obedience to a parent's authority was one of the fixed principles in the mind of this generous youth: in conſequence of this, he ſubmitted to the cruel ſentence that was now paſſed upon him; and, from mere compaſſion both to himſelf and the lady, avoided ſo tender and diſtreſsful a ſcene as taking leave of her. Excluſively of what himſelf muſt have felt from it, he conſidered that the ſhock might deſtroy a perſon of her weak frame in her preſent ſituation; and, as the ſentence of his father was irrevocable, that it could produce no good to either.

CHAP. VI.

OUR HERO JOINED BY A COMPANION WHOM HE NEITHER KNEW NOR EXPECTED.

MR. Wentworth, the father of the unhappy July, had a brother, a man of great worth and honour, who had ſerved in the army many years. He had diſtinguiſhed himſelf at the affair of Dettingen, and had been found among the dead on the fatal field of Preſton-Pans; not fallen, like the ſtragglers of that unhappy day, alone, and with his heels neareſt the ſcene of action, but, like the Roman Catiline, *longe a ſuis*, far from his own people, covered over with wounds, and in the midſt of the ſlaughtered ranks of the enemy.

Deeds worthy of reward often meet with it, while they ſeem to diſdain it. An officer among our own butchered troops might poſſibly have been left dying many days with leſs hurts; but the commander of the oppoſite handful, whoſe heart, however unjuſtifiable his enterprize had been, was full of honour and compaſſion, no ſooner ſaw, among the largeſt ſlaughter of his friends, an enemy yet breathing under ſuch accumulated means of death, than he ordered his own ſurgeons to attend him: in fine, he ſaw him cured; offered him his own conditions, if he would engage in his cauſe; and, when he found his loyalty to his ſovereign unſhaken, gave him his liberty; telling him—'You are my ——, 'though you will not be my friend. I 'think myſelf happy in having pre-'ſerved a life ſo valuable, though it be 'to fight againſt me.' The priſoner took his leave with a heart, though unalterable in it's principles, yet pierced with the ſenſe of his preſerver's virtues. He determined to change the ſcene of his ſervices, that he might not lift his arm immediately againſt the perſon to whom he owed his life. He quitted the regiment he was at that time in; and, turning his whole fortune into caſh, raiſed a company at his own expence, and embarked with them on the American ſervice.

Mr. Wentworth was leſs ſucceſsful in this generous attempt than he deſerved to have been: he had the misfortune to find a peace proclaimed before he came to the deſtined ſcene of his operations. He diſbanded his company; and, having no buſineſs in England but the ſoliciting ſome employ as a reward for his intended ſervices, he truſted that to his friends, while he remained in Nova Scotia. After receiving repeated refuſals, he retired to his brother's plantation, out of humour with the world, and determined to have no farther communication with it.

The brave and virtuous naturally love thoſe who are like themſelves. This gentleman, though he had lived now three months with his brother, had ſhut himſelf up with a few favourite books, and had made a point of it to be private and ſecret. His brother was not qualified to profit by, or join in, his converſation: they met only at meals, and only ſuch of thoſe as no other company were preſent at; and it was ſcarcely known that there was any body beſide the uſual family in the houſe by any of the iſland.

Though Mr. Wentworth had deſpiſed and avoided the company of his brother, it was much otherwiſe, however, with regard to his charming daughter. Juliet had been the companion of many of his retired hours. She had become enamoured of his virtues, even from his own modeſt accounts of the incidents under which they had come in action; and,

and, in return, had made him the confident of her amour, if her ſituation with young Edwards could be called ſuch.

He had entertained the higheſt notions of that young gentleman's gallantry and honour, from her accounts of the ſhort ſcenes in which he had been concerned with her; and his whole conduct, as related by others, ſo perfectly agreed with the character ſhe had given him, that he loved him, though he had not yet ſeen him, little leſs than the poor girl, who now deſpaired of him.

Mr. Wentworth communicated to his niece his reſolution of going over to England with him. She was charmed with the thought of having, by this means, if ſhe ſhould live, an opportunity of continually hearing of her lover; and was not a little pleaſed with the thought of his having a man who ſo well knew the world near him, in the ſcene of temptation he was launching into.

Mr. Wentworth took his laſt inſtructions from the unhappy July, which he engaged his honour to adhere punctually to; and, borrowing a ſmall ſum of his brother, embarked that night in the ſame veſſel with our hero. He had, immediately on his ſetting foot on board the veſſel, enquired after Mr. Edwards; and no ſooner ſaw it under ſail, than he informed him, with much preparation, that Miſs Juliet Wentworth was dead.

The tears our hero ſhed on that occaſion endeared him to his new friend for ever. People leſs calculated for being happy with one another, would have contracted a familiarity from a neceſſity of being ſeveral weeks together; but theſe made a friendſhip that never afterwards was diſſolved.

CHAP. VII.

A MEETING OF OUR HERO WITH HIS UNCLE—HIS FRIEND IS REDUCED TO A VERY UNLUCKY PERPLEXITY.

THE Weſt Indies, to people who do not game, is a place of very moderate expence: the utmoſt a man's friends expect of him, is to make them drunk as often as they come to ſee him; and that, as well there as here, is to be done on very moderate conditions. The father of our hero had furniſhed him, on his departure, with bills to the amount of five hundred pounds ſterling, with which he thought he might make a very good figure for the ſeven months he intended he ſhould ſtay in London: he had given him, however, a general order on his correſpondents, in caſe of deficiencies, and an unlimited bill of credit on his uncle Jeremy. To this gentleman's care he recommended him in a very preſſing manner; telling him, that it was altogether upon his account that he ſent him over, as he had expreſſed ſuch a great deſire to ſee him; and adding, that if the money he had given him was not ſufficient to maintain him like his ſon, he deſired he would advance whatever was proper, and that he would anſwer his bills, on demand, to the amount of it.

Uncle Jeremy received this letter and his nephew together, at Will's Coffee-houſe, as he was one evening enjoying the ſmell of chocolate, and pouring down his water, together with the effluvia of that richer liquor, as the boys, on any occaſion, opened the doors. The young gentleman, after an eaſy voyage, had arrived that afternoon in London, with his friend, who now, with much complaiſance, preſented him to the old gentleman, and told him how much his brother entruſted to his care when he committed his ſo beloved ſon to him.

The old gentleman, to avoid miſtakes, read the letter his nephew preſented to him, before he uttered a ſingle ſyllable: he then, putting on his ſpectacles, and raiſing the youth's face by putting his hand under his chin, told him he was a very comely lad, and had the family-face; for that, if he knew any thing of his own features, he was very like him; and immediately after turning to his companion—'But pray, Sir,' ſays he, 'who may you be? for I don't read 'any thing about you in the letter.'

This abrupt queſtion, while it a good deal ſhocked the natural politeneſs of the young gentleman, plunged the perſon to whom it was addreſſed into an almoſt inextricable difficulty: to acknowledge who he was, were to have diſconcerted his whole future plan; and he had not, during the whole voyage, recollected, that though the young gentleman had never queſtioned him farther in any thing than he choſe, this was a query very natural to have come from

ſomebody elſe, though he had no right to have expected it, perhaps, quite ſo early. He heſitated a few moments, and then anſwered, that his name was Spence; that he was an acquaintance of his brother's, and had come over in the ſame ſhip with the young gentleman.

'Sir,' ſays the old fellow, very ſourly, 'I muſt needs tell you, that I think you 'are not a great deal better than you 'ſhould be: and I ſhall deſire my ne- 'phew to ſhake off all ſuch acquaint- 'ances; the ſooner the better. There 'can't be much good, I am ſure, in a 'man who is afraid to tell his name 'when he is aſked it. As for your 'knowing his father, I don't hear any 'thing about it: nephew, tell me the 'truth, did you ever ſee him there? 'And as to your coming over in the 'ſame ſhip with him, and therefore pre- 'tending to be acquainted, in my mind 'it is much like a man that came here 'ſome years ago to borrow forty pounds 'of me, becauſe we had once dined at 'the ſame chophouſe together.'

The nephew having made no anſwer to the interrogatory put to him in the midſt of the preceding ſentence, the old gentleman repeated it with ſome vehemence, charging him, as he valued his friendſhip, to tell him the truth. 'Sir,' replied our hero, 'I will never do other- 'wiſe: I do not know that this gentle- 'man is acquainted with my father; 'but, Sir, I know him, and I have rea- 'ſon to love and honour him, as I am 'ſure you will do, when you know him, 'too.'—'Yes, I believe I ſhall, when I 'know him,' replies the old man with a ſneer of ſelf-applauded cunning. 'You 'are a child, and have ſeen nothing of 'the world: come, confeſs the truth to 'me; did you ever ſee him yourſelf be- 'fore you met aboard the veſſel? or do 'you know any body that belongs to 'him?' To theſe unlucky queſtions the youth was obliged to anſwer alſo in the negative; and the old fellow continued— 'Aye, aye, I ſee it at once. You don't 'find out yet, I ſuppoſe, nephew, that 'this fellow has been lurking all this 'while about you, to devour you: you 'own you did not know any thing of 'him till he came aboard; and I dare 'ſay, if the truth were out, he never 'came there neither till the veſſel was in 'the river. Aye, aye, you're a goodly 'one, I warrant you!' ſays he, addreſ- ſing himſelf to the ſuſpected perſon. 'You had better get away while you 'are well, for fear ſomebody here ſhould 'know you better than you deſire pre- 'ſently. A gang of them, nephew,' continued he, 'a gang of them, a pack 'of Iriſh ſharpers, that watch about the 'veſſels as they come in, juſt as the 'bawds and recruiting ſerjeants do about 'the country waggons, to kidnap every 'raw thing that comes in their way.'

Mr. Spence, as we ſhall, according to his own declaration, hereafter call that gentleman in this hiſtory; was all this while taking ſhort turns about the coffee-houſe, biting his lips, and changing colour ten times in a minute. He was rather vexed with the circumſtances of the old man's miſtake, than angry at the conſequences of it; and was curſing Fortune very heartily for involving him in a difficulty that he had a right to be cleared of, though ſhe had denied him the means of it. The old fellow ſaw all his confuſion, and attributed it to guilt. 'You ſee, nephew,' ſays he, 'how mad 'he is that he is found out: I found he 'was a liar.'

This was too much for the patience of the accuſed: though he had borne the heavieſt imputations with temper, Liar was a word there was no ſwallowing. 'Sir,' ſays he, going up to the uncle with great ſeverity of countenance, 'I 'hardly blame you for your ſuſpicions. 'I own, appearances are againſt me. I 'believe a love for your nephew, not an 'enmity to me, who am a ſtranger to 'you, has been your motive, and I 'eſteem you for it: but, Sir, only ap- 'pearances are againſt me; and, till I 'have ſatisfied you of this, I beg no 'more ſuch harſh words may be uſed 'in regard to me.' The uncle told him, there ſhould no farther words at all paſs between them, for that he ſhould inſiſt upon his nephew's having no farther acquaintance with him: 'and as to my- 'ſelf, Sir,' ſays he, 'I believe I know 'the world too well for you.' So ſaying, he took his nephew by the arm, and led him away, without giving him an opportunity of ſo much as ſpeaking to his ſuſpected acquaintance.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

MR. EDWARDS PUTS HIMSELF UNDER THE CARE OF HIS UNCLE. HIS FRIEND IS NOT TREATED QUITE SO WELL AS HE DESERVES.

THE converſation recorded in the preceding chapter had paſſed at a time when the coffee-houſe was full of company. The eyes of every body were upon Mr. Spence, as he was now left alone in the room; and as people are naturally inquiſitive about every ſtranger who mixes himſelf among them, and are ever ready to believe the worſt that can be ſaid of him, they all agreed that the old gentleman had reaſon for every thing he had ſaid. Some rejoiced in the poor young fellow's eſcape; ſome obſerved that he had it all ſtrong upon him; and one of the company inſiſted upon it, that he had ſeen him fifty times with Maclane. Mr. Spence, full of the vexation of ſo unexpected, ſo unmerited a cenſure, as he ſaw he now lay under on all hands, threw himſelf upon one of the benches, and was preſſing his forehead with his left hand as he leaned upon it; when, in conſequence of one of the company's whiſpering ſomething to the woman of the houſe, he found none of the boys would ſtir to bring him any thing he called for. He took care to aſſure himſelf of the truth of this, by giving his orders to two or three of the waiters ſeparately; and at length enquiring the cauſe of their neglect at the bar, when he had heard it, he walked deliberately to the upper end of the room, directing his eyes alternately to the company on both ſides, and ſpeaking very compoſedly and deliberately—'Gentlemen, which of 'you is it that ſuppoſes me not proper 'company for him at a coffee-houſe?' No anſwer was made to this as he went up the room; and, after the ſame ceremony in paſſing back again, he ſaid to the lady at the bar—'Madam, you find 'you was miſtaken: let me have a diſh 'of coffee.'

If this circumſtance had thoroughly ruffled him, his temper was put to a much ſeverer trial a few minutes after; a porter, while he was drinking his coffee, delivering him the following letter,

'SIR,

'I Am greatly concerned at the un-'worthy treatment you received 'from my uncle a few minutes ſince. 'I need not tell you, that his ſuſpicions 'have no weight with me; but, as my 'father has made me accountable to him 'for my conduct, you will not blame 'me that, till you have convinced him 'of his error, which I know you can 'eaſily do, I pay the reſpect I am com-'manded to his admonitions, and am 'not upon the footing I have been uſed 'to be, and wiſh ever to be, with you.

'Many things I have occaſionally 'ſaid, have, I believe, given you reaſon 'to depend upon my friendſhip. I muſt 'be a villain to leave you deprived of 'it's aſſiſtance, juſt on your arrival, 'when you are poſſibly unprepared for 'ſo improbable an event. It is to wipe 'off ſo black a ſtain from my own cha-'racter, that I take the liberty of in-'cloſing a bill for a hundred pounds to 'you; and of aſſuring you, at the ſame 'time, that there is nothing you may 'not at all times command, that is in 'the power of, Sir, your moſt obliged, 'and moſt obedient humble ſervant,

'GEORGE EDWARDS.'

Had the money been immediately neceſſary to Mr. Spence, he would not have willingly accepted it on ſuch conditions. He endeavoured to return it, but found the youth had made every attempt of that kind impracticable. The oftener he read the letter, the more reaſon he ſaw to acquit the young man of any fault toward him: he ſaw that he behaved as he ought, though at the expence of no little pain to himſelf; and, for his own part, he could only curſe the malicious perplexity that attended his fortune.

Uncle Jeremy could have been well content to have received more timely notice of the arrival of his nephew: for the preſent, however, to prevent his falling into ill hands, he had taken him to his lodgings; and, with many apologies for the meanneſs of the accommodation, put him into his own bed, promiſing to find a proper apartment for him the next day; and borrowing, for that night, the bed of a ſervant then in the country, who had chambers over him, for himſelf and the partner of his joys.

The

The young gentleman, who had not lain ſtill for ſome weeks before, ſlept pretty ſoundly in his new lodging, in defiance of a conſiderable number of acquaintance that had picked him up there. As to the uncle, his head was too full of the advantages he intended to make of his nephew, to ſuffer him once ſo much as to cloſe his eyes, or to remember that the blooming Ruth was beſide him. For the reſult of his projects, the gentle reader muſt, however, begin his attack upon the ſecond book of this our hiſtory.

We have brought our hero from the new world to the old, or, to ſpeak more appropriately to his own circumſtance, from the old world to a new one—pardon us geographers, if, in juſtification of this new phraſe, we affirm that we verily believe one of theſe worlds, as they are called, to be as old as the other—and here we cloſe the firſt book.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

THE

THE

ADVENTURES

OF

MR. GEORGE EDWARDS,

A CREOLE.

BOOK THE SECOND.

IN WHICH OUR HERO COMMENCES A MAN OF PLEASURE.

CHAP. I.

A COFFEE-HOUSE ACQUAINTANCE OFFERS HIS SERVICES TO MR. EDWARDS.

MR. Jeremy Edwards, with whoſe midnight meditations we cloſed the preceding book, ſummed up the whole toward morning, in the two following propoſitions: that a young Creole, who comes to England for education, is the bubble of every one who has the leaſt talent at cheating; and that, if a man is to be ſtripped, the money had better fall into the hands of his own family, than among ſtrangers. In conſequence of this, he determined to have as much as poſſible of the advantages of his nephew's deſtruction to himſelf; and another reaſon, which the reader may poſſibly gueſs at, made him reſolve that the profit of it ſhould be as great as it could. The youth, he imagined, ſhewed a very happy genius for being impoſed on: the apparent openneſs of his temper ſeemed to prove this; and the unlimited bill of credit his father had given him, ſatisfied the uſurer, that it was but at the expence of a quarrel with that gentleman that he might ſtrip him of half his fortune.

It has been obſerved, that there is no ſpecies of news which does not enlarge in proportion to the ſpace through which it is carried; and it may be added, that no article of news is ſure to receive ſo very conſiderable increaſe in it's travels, as that which relates to a man's fortune: if a perſon's eſtate be within twenty miles of London, two hundred pounds a year hardly gives him the credit of five; if it be ſituated in Yorkſhire, the ſame capital naturally riſes to eight; and, if in Cornwall, not a knight of the Land's End but makes it fifteen hundred, and as good land as ever crow flew over: from Ireland, no man of any degree of figure ever arrived with leſs than an eſtate of five and twenty hundred pounds a year; and the general allowance to the Weſt Indies is twelve thouſand; or, in a good year for ſugar, twice as much.

The hero of our ſtory, who had met with the fame of his uncle's fortune increaſed in this proportion in America, found his father's was not without the common advantage in England: he determined,

termined, to give himself the better figure, to take up the credit of both at the distant account; and, accordingly, every corner of Will's Coffee-house heard, the next morning, that the young fellow they had seen with the old usurer there over night, was worth twelve thousand pounds a year, and a hundred and fifty thousand pounds in ready money. The news had not spread to the Exchange, before it was affirmed, that every plantation upon the spot was mortgaged to him; and, at St. James's Coffee-house, every body was convinced of his being come over with an intent to purchase the island.

He no sooner entered Will's the following day, than every man who had but sat upon the same bench with his uncle for the last fortnight begged to be introduced to his acquaintance. Signor Squalli whispered the old fellow, that he was confident he read a taste for musick in his countenance: Mr. Pair'em begged to know whether he was engaged as to matrimony, for that he was daily applied to by women, from a hundred to a hundred and fifty thousand, to look out prudential matches for them; and the humble Mr. Stanza, after hinting at some little merit in his monody on the death of the Prince of Wales, entreated to know, whether a congratulatory address to the young gentleman on his arrival in England, with some proper honours to his family, might not prove agreeable?

While all these were attacking the old gentleman at once, as if every one intended to have a separate limb of him, a tall, raw-bon'd, ill-made fellow, in a velvet coat of ten colours, and with the address of a chairman, made up to the youth himself: 'Sir,' says he, 'me be de 'fair Connoitre, de Guardien, de what 'me verily believe you call in English 'de Pimpe. Me be ver well wid all de 'demireps of dis place, and me can introduce the Chevalier sans Peine to dem 'all round. My face, Monsieur, may 'be your security, that me no rival 'those who do me de great honour to 'employe me.'

Monsieur le Guardien was going on very earnestly, when the old man, who had by this time got rid of his new friends, seized the youth by the arm with great violence, and paid no sort of regard to the *sacre Dieu! quel Bête!* of the foreigner, as he hawl'd him out of the room. He soon saw there was no way of keeping his nephew long to himself; and he determined to make the best use of the short opportunity he saw before him. He hurried him home with all possible expedition; and told him it was by no means proper he should appear in publick till he was properly lodged and habited, and that he would immediately take the proper measures in regard to both those articles.

CHAP. II.

PREPARATIONS MADE BY UNCLE JEREMY FOR OUR HERO'S MAKING A FIGURE.

IN a corner of one of the worst squares in town, there stand, and indeed hardly stand, two houses, which seem to have been the habitations of the grandfathers of the people who built the rest of the square: these, half an age ago, fell into the hands of the ground-landlord; but his finances neither suffering him to rebuild nor repair them, they had added eleven years and a half to their antiquity, in an entirely useless state, when an enterprizing son of Mammon, who had long before quitted the occupation of a botcher, to rival people of fifty other trades by underselling them, made his applications to the unhappy proprietor, as he was one day mournfully meditating under their windows, and purchased them of him at a rate at which he could not possibly be a loser, unless somebody could have contrived to annihilate the materials.

Uncle Jeremy had, by accident, heard the circumstances of this bargain, not without much regret that it had not been his own instead of this universal interloper's, whom some strong reports, in regard to his connections with Lord Squander and young Dash, had rendered much to be suspected of changing his varied trade into the single, profitable branch, at this time almost solely occupied by the said Jeremy.

These, and some other motives which we are ashamed to confess we believe had their origin from envy at the renegade botcher's success in the world, determined Jeremy to visit these houses; and, at the same time that he made a cheap purchase, to draw in the present proprietor to an ill bargain, if possible,

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by means of the very artifices by which himself had the advantage of the rest of the world.

One of the houses was already sold to a gentleman of great fame, whose knowledge, it appeared by this instance, however, consisted more in old words than in old houses. The other Mr. Edwards entered immediately into treaty about; and informing the metamorphosed botcher that he knew the price he had bought them at, and dropping at the same time a casual hint that the house he was about to purchase must be *furnished*, he obtained it at the very price at which it had been purchased of the late proprietor; and hardly suffered the person who sold it him to make two hundred and eighty per cent. of his money by both bargains.

Mr. Edwards, though he did not pay quite two hundred pounds for this bargain, immediately entered it in his account, a large house in **** Square, bought at one thousand four hundred and sixty pounds. **** Square, he considered, had a very good sound; and a large house, in a square in a polite end of the town, he knew his brother could not think dear at that price. All he had to take care of was, the not suffering it to be sold again till they had settled their accounts; and this he knew it was his own fault if he permitted.

From the seat of this purchase it was but a short walk to Monmouth Street. The provident old gentleman entered every open door in the row, that is, every door in it; and, after taking notes of what he found to his purpose in each shop, he came back to that where he had met with most old-fashioned finery; and, agreeing for two full-laced suits that had been worn at the last coronation but one, he ordered the lace to be taken off from each, and cleaned; bought a cheap cloth in the shop for the new trimming with this finery; and immediately sent the foreman of the shop to measure his nephew for two new suits, agreeing with the master to make up the two that he had stripped for his own wear into the bargain.

Mr. Jeremy Edwards was an enemy to all bills; and, of all the bills in the world, to those of taylors. He had purchased the two rich suits outright; he now bargained for the materials and workmanship of the new, in his usual way: and, in fine, after paying twenty-seven pounds for the two, to be delivered compleat the next evening, and charging them in his account under the title of two very rich laced suits, one hundred and forty pounds, he closed his book; and his countenance declared a sufficient applause at his address and œconomy.

Though the profits of the day's expedition were already considerably greater than he had ever made in a twelvemonth before, it was a day of too much business for him to go home with so little of it done. He picked up the first upholsterer whose shop he passed by; and, taking him to the house he had just come into possession of, began talking with him of the furniture of the first floor. This part of the house, which he prudently considered was all that people ever were to see, he determined to set out handsomely; as to the rest, he had more frugal thoughts about it.

The man of whom Mr. Edwards had made the purchase, was informed, by the person who opened the door to him, that he had just carried in their neighbour, Mr. Settee, with him. The enraged botcher followed with the utmost expedition; and just entered the room as his rival Settee, who had been punctually informed of the circumstances of the intended furniture, and had been told that, if he did not set it at the lowest living price, another would be employed to do it, had delivered his estimate at three hundred and eighty pounds. There was an additional circumstance to all the admonitions which Mr. Edwards had given Settee as to the lowness of price, which operated not a little in his cause: this tradesman and his neighbour had long been envious rivals of each other's growing business; and the pride of being employed in the very house of his arch-enemy, had now spirited up Settee to engage in the furnishing this apartment at a price at which himself must, in reality, have been a loser.

The late owner of the house, who had a little recovered his breath while the other was delivering his estimate, now told Mr. Edwards, that he thought he hardly used him fairly; that he had sold him the house, as he very well knew, at no profit, entirely on the prospect of furnishing it; that—— He was going on at this rate, with a volubility and vociferation that would have been trou-

blesome enough, when Mr. Edwards very mildly checked him in this manner: 'I believe, Mr. ****, that you 'really did let me into the house 'cheap, to make yourself amends in the 'furnishing it. But, Sir, why all this 'passion? 'Tis only the first floor, not 'the whole house, that we are talking 'about. I am engaged in honour to 'make my nephew's money go as far 'as it can; and this gentleman, I believe, has answered the recommendation I had of him from my cousin 'Spare; and I really think has set the 'things so low, that no man, to have a 'living profit, could make them 'cheaper.'

Settee insisted on it that he had done this; and his rival hinted that he did not believe it. They grew warm apace; and a quarrel would certainly have ensued in a few minutes, that many people who had hated the quondam botcher as heartily as Edwards did, would have had sufficient entertainment in. His gratifications, however, were of a more rational kind. He saw he could make an advantage of their passions, by employing them against one another; and, instead of fomenting the dispute in the way it was going into, he said, very coolly—'Gentlemen, the period of this 'dispute, at present, portends no good 'to either of you: I am sorry that I 'have been the occasion of it, and I 'beg I may put an amicable end to it. 'Mr. Settee,' continued he, 'I am certain you have made your estimate so 'moderate, that no man can underwork 'you: let your neighbour see the list of 'particulars, and declare upon his honour whether he can furnish them 'cheaper; if not, why he can't blame 'me for taking care of money that is not 'my own; and you may finish with all 'expedition.'

Settee, who knew the terms he had computed upon, consented to this with an air of great triumph; telling Mr. Edwards—'You will now see, Sir, in 'how fair a manner I have dealt with 'you; since even this rival in the business, as vexed as he is to lose the job, 'won't pretend I have over-rated any 'article.'

Though Settee was well enough acquainted with his own reasons, he was mistaken in thinking he could see deep enough into his antagonist's, to be sure of success in this incident. It is true that this gentleman found every article in the account charged under the intrinsick value; but, considering that he had still the furniture of twelve rooms, by which he might make himself amends for any injury he should do himself in regard to these, he very boldly told Settee—'Sir, I know you depend upon 'my honour in this case, and will make 'a raving about betraying the secrets 'of the trade upon my speaking; but, 'Sir, I shall not see my friend's pocket 'picked upon any consideration whatsoever. Mr. Edwards,' continued he, 'you shall see how conscientious a 'dealer that gentleman is in a minute, 'Sir—I will engage to do this for a 'hundred pounds less than he offers it 'at.' Mr. Edwards, who protested he understood not these affairs, could say nothing to this but offer the alternative to Mr. Settee of taking the job on these terms, or leaving it. On his declining it, with some very harsh words to his antagonist, he told him he was sorry for the trouble he had given him in coming; and, leaving the other to lose about a hundred and thirty pounds, with all possible expedition he bought the furniture for the rest of the house in his way home through Knaves Acre.

CHAP. III.

CONTAINING A LOVE-LETTER AND A PORTRAIT OF THE FIRST JEWEL IN THE CREATION.

OUR hero, during the absence of his uncle on these important occasions, had made a short excursion from his lodgings: he had ventured as far as Westminster Bridge one way, and to Charing Cross the other. This was indeed against the express commands of Mr. Jeremy; and possibly he would not have ventured to do it, had not Mr. Le Guardien been accidentally walking at a little distance from the door, as he had opened it, half determined, and half afraid, to look a little about him.

This good-natured gentleman immediately offered his service: he gave him a taste of the wine at Stevenson's; explained to him the beauties of the equestrian statue at the other extremity of his journey; and, in their way back, led him into the best shop in town to buy his toothpicks and lavender water.

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Our hero was by no means satisfied with the behaviour of his companion; his civilities were too forced, his offers of friendship and service too exaggerated, and his whole manner too distant from what his habit bespoke him, to gain him any credit with a man of his judgment: he made him a cool compliment as he turned in at the gate, and took his leave without any desire of renewing the acquaintance.

The young gentleman had got home before his uncle, and was making some formidable attacks upon the virtue of Mrs. Ruth, when a porter delivered into the hands of that fair-one, as she attended his summons from the door, a square piece of painted paper, which was so very unlike every thing she had seen before, that she was preparing to lay it by with the utmost care till the return of her master. The interruption of the lover's attack had only given new vigour to it; he was seizing on her swelling breast, and about to rifle ten thousand charms at once, when he discovered on this paper, in the midst of a crowd of painted Cupids, bleeding hearts, and suppliant Venus's, the name of —— Edwards, Jun. Esq. ushered in with the title of the Honourable.

He seized upon the letter with great eagerness; and whether it was that he recollected he could have Ruth at any time, or that one passion naturally falls before another in the human breast, he left the ruffled damsel, we should have said, to adjust her tucker, if she had worn any such ornament; and hastily opening the seal of this French case, dropped a folded paper out of it. When he had opened this, he found it ornamented with a margin full of the same emblematick figures that were on the cover; and in the space within that enchanting verge it contained the following address, written in a very small and not very plain hand, and in lines of different lengths and distances—

'The rose and lily dwell upon thy cheek,
'And in those eyes doth every virtue speak.
'Thy shape like *Harkilus* thy strength de-
'clares;
'And every part the stamp of manhood
'bears.
'To see thee and to love thee is the same,
'And who is she can love and hide her flame?
'I think not of success, for all that I
'Intend is but to tell thee this, and die.

'The gardener, when he incloseth his
'ground, planneth out his walks, and
'saith unto his attendants —Here shall
'rise the mount, here wind the stream,
'and here extend the grass-plat; yet re-
'membereth that lawns, water, mounts,
'and terraces, do not make a garden.
'It is in vain that tree answereth to tree,
'that shade here receiveth us from sun-
'shine, and that there sun-shine in-
'viteth us from the shade; it is not yet
'compleat: Nature may do all this; the
'tulip must invite the eye with it's paint-
'ing, the lily must charm with it's white-
'ness, and the musk-flower fill the sense
'with sweets, or it is a park, not a garden.
'Thus I have in vain ornamented my
'apartments; in vain the gilded foliage
'invites me to look into the glass; in
'vain the crimson couch receiveth my
'sinking limbs; in vain the rising bed
'calleth to be pressed, if thou my flow-
'er, my blossom, thou who art lily, tu-
'lip, and musk together, thou whose
'form feasteth every sense at once, re-
'fusest to come to me. I have many
'other sentiments to communicate to
'you, but these are too much to be told on
'that which cannot blush while it de-
'livers them.
'I have never rested since the mo-
'ment I saw you come into the shop
'where I lodge, to buy a wash-ball.
'Would they could sell me any thing
'that could wash out the remembrance
'of such charms!—But perhaps you will
'come to me. In that hope I support a
'few moments longer the miserable be-
'ing of your eternally devoted slave and
'creature,

'ELIZ. SPARKLE.'

Our hero gazed with a wild astonishment on this pompous declaration. We need not say it was the most extraordinary performance that had ever fallen in his way. Some of our readers, we are afraid, will be apt to join with him in his admiration. Thoroughly satisfied we are, however, that whatever censure it may fall under, the harsh and almost universal term of contempt *Low* cannot be passed upon it; and, if any should suppose it is out of nature, we can only answer, that while they by this convince us they do not know the lady who could have written it, they give sufficient proof that themselves are out of life, to every body that is in it.

To answer such a letter was impossi-

ble, nor was it neceſſary; to appear before the lady was the only proper reply to it. Mr. Edwards made little heſitation about this; and though Mrs. Ruth begged of him, for Heaven's ſake, not to go out again, (whether this was from the fear of her maſter's diſpleaſure, or from ſome other motive, we ſhall not preſume to gueſs) out he ſallied, with as much precipitation as burſts forth the trembling huſband, whoſe helpmate's voice rolls ſwifter than her perſon down the narrow-winding ſtairs, to tell him her poor babes muſt be ſtarved for want of bread, while he is rioting and waſting his time and his money at an alehouſe.

He had no ſooner enquired in the ſhop if Miſs Sparkle was at home, than a very polite footman conducted him up ſtairs: and he had no ſooner entered a very elegant apartment, than the more elegant miſtreſs of it, a fine, delicate, blooming creature, threw herſelf upon his boſom; and, with eyes ſwimming in floods of tenderneſs as ſhe preſſed him to her ſoft breaſt, ſighed out—'And 'am I ſo happy to ſee you, dear, good 'creature! But I am a fool to fancy I am 'happy.' Here ſhe drew herſelf from him, and ſinking upon a couch, covered her bluſhes, or her want of bluſhes, which of the two the hiſtorian poſitively ſayeth not, with her hand, and waited her lover's declaration.

When we conſider the part of the world Mr. Edwards was juſt come from, where women of taſte or delicacy would be as much out of the courſe of nature as centaurs or unicorns, we are not to wonder that the ſight of one of the elegantſt figures of this elegant age ſtruck him with no common emotions. Miſs Sparkle is as careful of her attitudes, on theſe occaſions, as the people who only repreſent occurrences of this kind on the ſtage; ſhe practiſes an intended air of ſoftneſs, or ſeverity, as often at the glaſs as Mrs. Cibber does. The form in which ſhe had now diſpoſed her limbs was of the moſt advantageous kind, and was too thoroughly practiſed before-hand not to be played off in perfection. Her head, reclining to one ſide, gave her an opportunity of ſhewing one of the brighteſt eyes Nature ever gave a woman; and a cheek naturally all lily, but now ſtained with a living crimſon, that every inſtant glowed more and more intenſely; and might have alarmed the youth who came out of a rattleſnake country, had he recollected that the colours of that terrible reptile always brighten up in this manner when it is about to do miſchief. Her neck diſplayed more of it's ſnowy brightneſs by this poſture, than it could have done under any other circumſtances; and the hyacinthine veins that wandered over it, almoſt diſcloſed through their thin coats the purple fluid that rolled through them. Her boſom let ſomebody deſcribe that dares to look at it; I have more regard to the inhabitant of my own. Her waiſt, naturally almoſt too ſlender, was now rather improved than injured by the effects of an accident that had a little rounded it. The ſattin petticoat, from which the gown had fallen back with an artful negligence, fell ſo cloſe, as almoſt to ſhew the ſhape of the limbs it covered; and it's ſhortneſs ſuffered about the half of one of the trueſt formed legs in the univerſe to ſhow itſelf, terminated by the only foot in the world that is worthy to have that honour. The white ſattin ſhoe, the gauze ſilk ſtocking, the elegance of the gown, and the fineneſs of the linen, all conſpired to add, if poſſible, to the charms of the object. The youth, in honeſt rapture, ſighed out what he could not ſpeak; and, after three days tranſport, iſſued out of the apartments of this earthly angel with a heart full of triumphant content, and with three hundred pounds leſs than he went in with in his pocket.

CHAP. IV.

A VISIT TO THE LADY; THE FIRST PUBLICK APPEARANCE OF OUR HERO.

ORESTES, when he had got Pyrrhus's throat cut for the ſake of Hermione, and loſt Hermione into the bargain, was a tame character in compariſon of uncle Jeremy, who, after venturing ſo conſiderable a ſum of money, and promiſing himſelf ſuch immoderate advantages from it, had now, for three days together, loſt the man on whoſe account he had been doing it.

The youth, who did not think it prudent to return to a ſcene of dirt and quarrelling, immediately, from ſo oppoſite a party, had aſked the lady where he could ſit down agreeably for an hour or two; and

and she had, by perfect accident, directed him to George's in Pall Mall. He had scarce entered, when two or three people were making towards him at once, but were prevented by Monsieur Le Guardien, who, making a diagonal from an opposite quarter of the room, crossed between the youth and them; and immediately facing about, entered into a conversation with him.

Young minds are always very communicative of their successes in love affairs: the youth was at first surprized at the foreigner's congratulating him on the happiness he had been enjoying; but he immediately after talked over the whole scene of rapture to him; and was no sooner informed that he had owed it to this gentleman, who had taken him into the shop for that purpose, and had mentioned him favourably to the lady; than, as he had always understood these kind of services were to be paid for, he was offering a gratuity. The other stopped his hand, with—'Me excuse 'all dis; me see you be very young: 'but Monsieur, the gentilhomme never 'take money. *Eh bien Sire*, shall we play 'a party at piquet?' Our hero, who had been used to beat his father and all his acquaintance at this game, readily accepted the challenge, and in half an hour lost two hundred and forty pounds. This unluckily was one hundred and forty more than he had about him. He was afraid to go on, and was under some confusion how to give over: the foreigner immediately saw it; he politely made slight of the accident, accepted the hundred pound bill he had about him, and his note of hand for the remainder, and left him to return to his uncle.

Mrs. Ruth, who met him at the door of the old gentleman's apartment, easily guessed the reason of the cold and contemptuous looks she now received from him. She told him, with a sigh, her master was not at home; that he had been almost distracted for him these three days; and was now, she believed, waiting for him at the house he had taken for his residence: she gave his chairmen the necessary instructions where to carry him; and he, in a very little time, found himself at his new home.

Uncle Jeremy was sounding the upholsterer, who had furnished the best apartment, at what rate he would take back the things, in case the gentleman for whose use they were intended should dislike them, or should—— or, in short, should not come to the house. That tradesman, who had now twice suffered very heavily by the old gentleman's cunning, resolved to make himself some reparation in this last bargain: he had named some very hard conditions, and told him, no man else of the trade would have any concern in the affair, as he would see there was something wrong at the bottom. The old fellow was sensible enough of this, and was pleading very humbly for better terms, when a thundering knock at the door alarmed every body's attention; and the uncle, on getting to the window, had the joy to see his lost nephew walk out of a chair, and enter the house. The rage which under other circumstances would have been vented on the young gentleman, was now all discharged on the upholsterer; the old fellow thrust him out of doors, with a multitude of very opprobrious, we do not venture to say, unjust names; and, immediately running to his nephew, caught him in his arms; and, while he expressed his real joy at seeing him, wholly forgot the resentment his absence might have very well justified.

The youth was in raptures at his accommodations, and his heart fluttered strangely at the sight of the two gaudy suits that lay on the bed: he immediately dressed himself in one of them; he strutted about from glass to glass in his dining-room, and admired the elegance of every thing about him; he wished for nothing so much as sending to his dear Sparkle, to partake of his pleasures; but this the old gentleman rendered impracticable, by staying to sup with him, and even to see him in bed.

A sale of a city alderman's effects had luckily helped uncle Jeremy to his shrevalty chariot, on the first day of the young gentleman's absence, for twelve guineas. He had employed a journeyman coach-painter to lick up and gild it for four more, and had entered it in his account at two hundred and sixty pounds ten shillings: this had been ready the day before, such expedition had been used about it; and, on the succeeding morning, it was the first object that met our hero's eyes, as he looked out into the street. He now found he had only locked himself up during a period in which it was impossible for him to have been seen as he ought; and impatient to shew his mistress his splendour and magnificence,

magnificence, he ordered a dinner for her at four, dreſſed himſelf as quick as his admiration at every part of his habit would permit, ordered his chariot to the waſhball ſhop, and after it had attracted the eyes of every body thereabout for five hours, returned back in triumph in it, with the blooming Sparkle by his ſide.

CHAP. V.

AN UNEXPECTED MEETING BETWEEN MR. EDWARDS AND UNCLE JEREMY; A NEW SUPPLY ADVANCED, AND THE CONDITIONS OF IT.

MR. Edwards was leading his miſtreſs with infinite gaiety into the dining-room, when he ſaw the venerable figure of his uncle filling one of the eaſy chairs by the fire-ſide. If the delicacy of the lady was ſtrangely ſhocked at the appearance of ſo uncouth a creature, how much more ſo was it, when, with great ſeverity of countenance, he advanced up to her, and deſired her to walk down ſtairs again!

It was in vain the lover pleaded: the old fellow was too diſcerning in the ways of the world, not to ſee at once of what quality the lady was who was introduced into the houſe with ſo much the appearance of the miſtreſs of it; and the conſideration of what he had already ſuffered from her, as he very rightly judged ſhe was the perſon who had kept his nephew all the preceding time in ſecret, rendered him inexorable. All that the lover could do, was to ſend her home in his chariot; and this, in ſpite of all the old fellows's reaſons and remonſtrances, he inſiſted on.

We do not always ſee the event of our actions, or the reſults of the accidents which croſs them. The abſence of this lady, though it heartily mortified our youth for the firſt half-hour, gave an opportunity afterwards for the uncle's entering on a ſubject at leaſt as neceſſary to him as the lady herſelf, and which it would have been impoſſible to have brought upon the carpet before her: this was money.

Uncle Jeremy rather hoped than imagined the ſtripling had already got rid of the ſum his father had furniſhed him with for his whole expedition. The theme was no ſooner ſtarted, however, than the nephew declared the emptineſs of his pockets; and the old gentleman, after ſome gentle rebukes for his extravagance, and declaring the utter incapacity he was in, after the expences of the houſe, furniture, and equipage, to furniſh him; obſerved, when he had thoroughly plunged him into deſpair, that he believed he did know one way of ſupplying him with ſomething for his preſent occaſions; but that he muſt borrow it from a perſon who was an uſurious raſcal, and would inſiſt upon five and twenty per cent.

The youth readily enough agreed to the conditions; and the old fellow, who had told him he believed he could get him four hundred on theſe terms, recollecting in his way home that he could never make ſo much advantage of his money any other way, emptied all his bags and pocket-books, and returned in an hour, telling him, he had found the old villain at home, had ſucceeded beyond expectation, and had brought him no leſs than two thouſand pounds.

The young gentleman was eagerly writing his draft upon the father for the money, and calculating the intereſt of two thouſand pounds, at twenty-five per cent. for three months, which he reckoned as the utmoſt time for making the remittance, when the uncle informed him, that theſe people never lent for leſs than a year certain; 'though for my 'own ſake, Sir,' ſays he, 'I muſt beg 'you to ſolicit your father to remit it 'ſooner than three months if he can, 'becauſe I ſhall be uneaſy at continu-'ing longer than neceſſary engaged for 'ſo large a ſum.' He told him, he need not indeed trouble himſelf to add the intereſt, for that the lender, in theſe caſes, always deducted it at firſt out of the principal; and, in conſequence of this equitable agreement, counted him out fifteen hundred pounds, and took his draft of three months upon his father for the two thouſand.

Diſadvantageouſly as they were obtained, however, our hero now found himſelf poſſeſſed of all the requiſites of a fine gentleman; and the uncle, who conſidered that he could have no farther benefit from him for ſome time, and that it was no more his buſineſs to be ſeen encouraging him in his extravagances, than it was his intereſt to check him in them,

them, retired to the arms of Mrs. Ruth, whose virtue something very like a miracle had preserved; and never troubled his nephew with a visit for five weeks after.

CHAP. VI.

MR. EDWARDS IS INTRODUCED TO A ROUT. CHARACTER OF A REMARKABLE LITTLE LADY.

MR. Edwards, in whom a natural love of justice was a first principle, no sooner found himself possessed of this sum, than he dispatched a servant to invite Mr. Le Guardien, to whom he had lost his money at piquette, and paid him the remainder of the sum.

The foreigner pressed the not receiving it at that time, if it was of any inconvenience to him; and, in spite of the utmost declarations of the other, received it with a very well affected reluctance.

He sat with him half an hour after the settling this point, talking of the common occurrences, and upon other equally interesting topicks; and at the end of this time was taking his leave. The youth, who had seen so little of the town, or known so little of the history of any lady in it, that every thing was news to him, had been vastly entertained with the chit-chat of his visitor: he pressed him to stay to supper; but the other, with many apologies, declined the honour, telling him he was engaged at a rout that evening; but adding, that he would, if he pleased, introduce him to some of the best company in town, that would be assembled there.

Mr. Edwards declined it, as if he was more than half willing: the stranger saw this, and pressed him earnestly, telling him, in fine, that if he refused to go, he should not think he believed he had any such appointment. Our hero's backwardness had only proceeded from his diffidence of his own qualifications for appearing in such company; this his new friend saw as well as the rest, and, by two or three very familiar arguments, got the better of it: they stepped into the chariot together; and, as they went along, our hero expressing a desire to know who the lady was to whose house they were going, the foreigner answered him in terms which, put into English, would have run about thus:

'The lady, Sir, to whom I shall this 'evening have the honour to introduce 'you, is at once, perhaps, the greatest 'and the least woman in the kingdom. 'I would begin my account of her with 'telling you who she is, if I was in-'formed of that circumstance; which I 'am apt to believe I should be, if she 'was acquainted with it herself. You 'will find her in the house of, or perhaps 'more properly, in the same house with, 'a gentleman whose name she bears, 'and whom you would join in the opi-'nion of the world, and suppose to be 'her father, but that you will see him 'behave to her with all the respect due 'from a dependant; and the lady to him 'with an air of easy superiority, though 'tempered with the utmost politeness.

'If you hear her converse in publick, 'you will declare her to have studied 'only the arts of courts: if in a more 'private party, you will think famili-'arity itself inspires every part of her 'deportment, and judgment every sen-'timent of her conversation. Engage 'her on a topick of the Belles Lettres, 'and you will imagine her life has been 'devoted to reading; but hear her touch 'the harpsichord, and you will retract 'all your former opinions, and assert, 'that the rest of her qualifications must 'be innate; for that this alone cannot 'have been acquired at a less expence 'than that of her whole life's applica-'tion.

'You will find her house crouded with 'people of the first quality. A foreign 'ambassador never was four days among 'us without being introduced to her; 'or half four days afterwards, during 'his whole stay, without visiting her.

'You won't find her wantonly pro-'fuse of money; but you will never see 'an instance of her wanting it, any more 'than ****.' The foreigner was going on in his character, when the chariot stopped at the door, and prevented farther conversation.

Our hero was introduced to the lady of the house in form; and having the good fortune to come in early, he had the pleasure to convince himself, in a quarter of an hour's conversation with her, that all the foreigner had advanced was little in comparison of what he ought to have said.

said. Mr. Edwards, who never made a compliment to an unworthy object, was always ready to say every civil thing to a person's face that he had reason to say any where else. The lady was not displeased with his address, though much out of the usual stile; but she told him, with an honest blush, that her place in his good opinion would be but very short-lived, for that he would in a few minutes see two persons there, before whom no other female pretensions to any merit in conversation could stand.

The words were hardly delivered, before two ladies entered, who, it was easy to distinguish by their manner, were greatly above the common level: the one of them wore in her face all the jovial pleasantry of Milton's Euphrosyne; and the open countenance and free soul of the other were never represented but in the Liberality of Guido. It was easy to find, by half a dozen sentences, that these were the rivals the lady of the house had told him of: whether he would have allowed them all that pre-eminence that her modest opinion of her own qualifications had declared for, we have indeed no power to inform the reader; for, after some congratulations to another lady, who came in immediately afterwards, in which she was told that every thing followed the interests of her family; that Lord H—— was appointed principal; Mr. S——, his substitute; and Bishop H——, the instructor; the card tables were set, the Pharaoh bank established, and the company grew intent on their diversion, and spent the succeeding five hours in doing very little more than what automatons of wood and wire might have performed as advantageously.

Mr. Edwards, whose utter unacquaintance with all games of skill rendered him no sort of match for any body at the whist or brag parties, left a hundred pounds behind him at the Pharaoh table, and very coolly repaired to his bed by four in the morning.

CHAP. VII.

A DISSERTATION ON THE MODERN ART OF HUMBUGGING.

THERE is a species of wit, if, according to the modern custom, we may be allowed to call lying by that name, which was very successfully laughed out of the world some years ago by the Spectator: but as Nature, though you push her off with a pitchfork, as Horace says, will return upon you, the triumph of that author was but temporary; it has of late been revived among us with many additional advantages, and is at this day practised with great success in every polite company in town.

In the days of the Spectator, the art, however odious it appeared to him, consisted in one simple proposition, and was no more than the telling a plain bare-faced falsehood with an undaunted countenance. A fellow, who could inform his friend that his father had just broke his neck; or a stranger, that his house was burnt down two hours before; and, after giving them half a day's pain and anxiety, could excuse the lye, and claim the title of a man of wit, by pronouncing aloud the word *bite*; was at the head of the science: but, in our more improved age, the professors of it have done well to change it's name, as they have indeed made it a more complex and intricate art.

The professor of the modern Humbugg, for such is the polite name of this qualification, must either have from Nature an unalterable countenance, or from Art a power of commanding all it's successive variations, and preserving it inviolably in each as long as the present situation of the cate renders it necessary: he must have a head full of imagination, and a heart empty of every trace of candour or humanity. The first sacrifice he must make to it is truth; the next is friendship. No man is a proper object of it who has not integrity enough, or a sufficiently good opinion of the person who abuses him, to suppose him incapable of fraud or meanness; and it can never be exerted with success against any one, but such as either the person that employs it calls his friend, or who has real merit enough to support some degree of praise.

Under these circumstances the Humbugger attacks the man whom he has selected for his butt; and, while he prostitutes his own candour to the raising his good opinion of himself too high, he gives the signal to every body about him to laugh at him for a coxcomb, for doing so.

A servile flattery is the basis of this great branch of the art; but, while it possesses

poſſeſſes all the meanneſs of that quality, it infinitely excels it in degree, and adds, to all the baſeneſs of the vice itſelf, that of it's being done with a profeſſed intent to hurt the object.

It was the fortune of our hero to meet with one of the honeſt and ingenious gentlemen who profeſs this noble art, at the rout where he ſpent his evening juſt deſcribed: had it not been ſo, gentle reader, thou would'ſt, in all probability, never have found this digreſſion concerning the art itſelf in our memoirs. The gentleman of that polite company who was poſſeſſed of this amiable qualification, had it not ſingle; he profeſſed alſo the honeſt and ingenious art or trade, by which ever name it may be propereſt to call it, of the gameſter; and, by the help of a partner who underſtood him, and had learnt his ſignals, made a tolerable livelihood of whiſt.

That his partner in the art might be leſs ſuſpected, he took care the perſon ſhould be of the ſex leaſt liable to ſuch a ſuſpicion. He had begun with teaching her the game in an uncommonly perfect manner; and, after this, had inſtructed her in his ſignals, by means of which, by the artful diſpoſition of the fingers, and certain mute ſigns from the feet, they were able to inform one another of every card in their hands. The drawing the hand down one ſide of the face when a freſh ſuit was played, expreſſed the having the Ace; the opening the hand of cards, the King; the drawing them cloſer, the Queen; and no ſignal at all, the Knave: a gentle touch of the foot was the notice of one honour; a repetition of it deſcribed two; and ſo of the reſt.

By this means, Whiſt became an eſtate to both of them: they played the game ſo well, that, when they were ſeparate, they had more than an equal chance of winning; and, when they happened to be partners, nothing could prevent it. They made money, more or leſs, of every body they played with. But their great market was, when they could fix upon ſome man of large fortune and little diſcernment: on theſe occaſions, they never were at a loſs to find a partner for their dupe, who would promote deep play, and be beat as often as they pleaſed, on the eaſy condition of having his money returned to him with ſome ſmall advantages; and they found one means or other uſually to keep up the ſpirit of ſuch a party, as long as the perſon on whoſe account it was inſtituted was worth ſixpence.

Mr. Pliant, for ſo was the little beau called whoſe character we have been giving, had marked Edwards, at his firſt entrance into the room, as a gentle innocent, or, in his own phraſe, a pigeon cut out on purpoſe for his plan: it was with great joy he found ſoon afterwards he was a Creole, as, from that circumſtance alone, he thought himſelf ſufficiently let into the ſecret of his qualifications and improvements; and he had no ſooner ſeen him loſe a hundred pounds without emotion, than he ſet him down upon his liſt for a prize of at leaſt four thouſand.

A bubble of this conſequence was worth taking ſome pains to ſecure. The only accidents that could croſs Mr. Pliant's purpoſe were, that another party might ſecure him, or that he might at one time or other ſuſpect the means of their ſucceſs. To evade the poſſibility of either of theſe, Mr. Pliant called in to the aſſiſtance of Sharping the ſiſter art of Humming: he waited on Mr. Edwards early the next morning at his lodgings; told him he had enough to plead in excuſe of the abruptneſs of ſuch a viſit, for that it was intended only to prevent miſchief; and concluded—'Sir, 'you are a ſtranger to the dangers you 'may run in town, in the way to an 'amour that is worth purſuing. I ob'ſerved your eyes,' continued he, 'very 'buſy about the neck of Lady Bloom; 'and I may tell you, under the precau'tions I ſhall give you, that you are not 'indifferent to her. Shall I ſay, I read 'it in her eyes? I'll tell you the truth; 'ſhe enquired after you of me, with an 'emotion that was too much for curio'ſity alone to have inſpired. You may 'have her, if you purſue her; but you 'have a rival that will be troubleſome. 'You ſaw the tall genteel fellow, with 'pale hair, that leant over her; he 'marked every glance, on both ſides, 'between you: indeed, he will not be 'very haſty, I believe, in a thing of this 'kind, becauſe he has been unhappy 'enough to kill two people already; but 'I dare not aſſure you he will part with 'his miſtreſs tamely.'

Mr. Edwards, who had liſtened with an unaltered countenance to this narration, anſwered coolly—'I ſhould ima'gine, Sir, there is no man who would 'refuſe to draw his ſword on ſo good an

'occasion.'—'I don't suppose, Sir,' replied Pliant eagerly, 'that you would; 'but I thought it friendship, nay, indeed, but common humanity, to a 'stranger, to inform you of the superiority of your rival in this point. As 'to the sword, he is in continual practice; and, for pistols, it has been his 'custom to fire at a six-pence twenty 'times a day for these two years, on 'account of an officer of horse, who has 'been all that time in France, and with 'whom he has an engagement of this 'kind at his return. This gentleman, 'you are to know, Sir, is as famous for 'the pistol as your rival is for the sword; 'and all this preparation has hardly yet 'set him upon the level with him.'

It was easy, from Mr. Edwards's answer, to find that he was *taken in*, as the phrase runs; that is, that he did not suppose Mr. Pliant to be a liar or a rascal; and that he had a good opinion enough of himself to believe it very possible that a woman of consequence might be in love with him. Perhaps Mrs. Sparkle had conduced not a little to opening the way to this mischief, by the extravagant encomiums she had bestowed on his person and accomplishments. Many a man has fallen a sacrifice to the vanity and ingratitude of his mistress on such an occasion; and an honest fellow has no sooner talked a woman he likes into a belief that she is an angel, and that all womankind are contemptible in comparison of her, than she determines, since this is the case, not to throw such charms away upon him: and Mr. Edwards's mistress now seems to have shared the same fate. It would not have been easy, by any other means, to have stopped the torrent of his adoration for the divine Sparkle; but no sooner the more divine Lady Bloom appeared as her rival, than, conscious from that mistress's flattery that he might carry this if he liked it, he determined that he would.

He thanked Mr. Pliant very politely for this act of friendship, and pressed him to breakfast with him. At noon they went into the Park, where one of the first objects that met their eyes was Lady Bloom, jigging along the Mall with all the freedom of air of the unhappy libertines, who were throwing themselves in the way of every body they came near for bread; and dressed perfectly in the fashionable taste, that is, so like those unhappy creatures, that nothing but a personal knowledge of her could have prevented the taking her for one of them.

Our party paid their compliments as they passed her; and she returned them with a most graceful smile, and with a stoop of the head, that expressed a mixture of satisfaction and of a tender languor. This, though it meant nothing at that time, had been copied from some happy fair one, in whom it expressed all that our hero thought he read in it on this occasion.

However favourable Mr. Edwards's ideas might be from this circumstance, certain it is, he had raised them on a very slight foundation; for the lady, at this time, knew nothing of the matter: she had directed her compliment solely to Mr. Pliant, who knew too much of the world to understand any more by it than she meant. He did not fail, however, to place it all to the account of his friend; he told him, there was evidently love enough in her soul, but he wished, for both their sakes, she had more discretion: he begged leave to quit him for a moment; and walking up to her ladyship, who was a woman of great spirit, and fond of raillery to an uncommon degree, he told her so much of his plot upon the Creole as regarded herself, and she promised, with great readiness, to join in the *humm*, and promote it to the utmost.

We mention this, as an instance how easy it is for a man to be deceived, where a female is in the party against him; and how naturally a woman of fashion may, while she intends only to be witty, become an accomplice with a pick-pocket. Nature never formed a man so happily for the exercise of this polite species of wit as Mr. Pliant; the natural delicacy of his person, the softness of his manner, the interesting complaisance that shewed itself in him on every occasion, and the unlimited command he had over the muscles of his face, conspired to render it natural and unsuspected in him. He told our hero, with great apparent goodnature, that he had been saying every thing in the world in his favour to the lady, and at the same time preaching up some caution to her. Mr. Edwards was full of acknowledgments for his good offices; and the morning concluded with his new friend's engaging him to dine at his house, where, by perfect accident, there happened to be a lady who

was

was an intimate of Lady Bloom's, and who was no sooner informed of the violence of the lover's passion for her ladyship, than she promised to do every thing in her power in his favour.

CHAP. VIII.

THE HAPPINESS OF A FAMILY ACQUAINTANCE; AND THE ADVANTAGES THAT SOMETIMES ACCRUE FROM IT.

LADY Bloom did not fail to contribute her share to the entertainment that was to be furnished from our hero's passion for her; she half killed her chairmen with the hurry of running from one house to another, to give an account of it: nor did she stop her course till she had told every female, and most of the males of her acquaintance, of the new-landed savage, who fancied she was desperately in love with him. As to the lady our hero had been so happy to meet with at his friend Beau Pliant's, she was no other than the person we have already celebrated as the accomplice of that industrious chevalier at his whist schemes.

Our hero now thought himself extremely happy: he had got rid of the troublesome acquaintance of his uncle, he knew not how or why; he had money in plenty in his pocket; he was on the high road to an intrigue with the finest woman in town; and he had made an acquaintance, as it appeared to him, in the most agreeable, sociable family in the world; and more particularly an intimacy with a man who esteemed and loved him, and who appeared as able as willing to serve him in a thousand different circumstances.

Thus it appeared to Mr. Edwards at least; and thus, gentle reader, whoever thou art, it has many times appeared to thee, when thy ill fate has been as busy for thy ruin as our hero's at this time was for his. He played at cards every afternoon at Mr. Pliant's; he met Lady Bloom every evening at one rout or other: he never made the least advances to her that were not returned with an open freedom; and he could, on every occasion, see the eyes of the whole company fixed with envy, as he understood it, upon him. If he observed them laugh, he concluded it was at her indiscreet passion; but this he never so much as wished to check. He was of an age at which the boasting of an amour is one of the greatest pleasures that attends it, and is a pleasure that seldom is suppressed, though the price of it be the reputation of the person in the world to whom the betrayer has most obligations. An observation this, which, if rightly attended to, would keep every woman, who has the least regard for her reputation, from engaging in an intrigue with any man under eight and twenty.

The true state of our hero's affairs at this time, however, was, that he had a sum sufficient to encourage him in extravagance, not to support him in it: he had lost the only acquaintance in the world who would have thought it worth while to advise him; he had made an intimacy with a man who had engaged him in a pursuit that made him the jest of every company he fell into, and who, with the assistance of his friendly family, had by degrees stripped him, hundred by hundred, of every guinea he had been master of; and, under colour of giving him a chance for winning back, had afterwards got him eight hundred and fifty guineas in debt to him: for this he very good-naturedly accepted a draft upon uncle Jeremy, payable at sight, having been previously informed that the father had given him an unlimited bill of credit on that gentleman.

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

THE

ADVENTURES

OF

MR. GEORGE EDWARDS,

A CREOLE.

BOOK THE THIRD.

IN WHICH OUR HERO MAKES GREAT ADVANCES TOWARD BECOMING A PHILOSOPHER OF THE FIRST CLASS.

CHAP. I.

A SCHEME OF BEAU PLIANT'S ON OUR HERO DOES NOT SUCCEED PERFECTLY TO HIS EXPECTATION.

IT is a maxim with the people of Mr. Pliant's ſtamp, that the money they have won is never ſecure till it is in their pocket. This gentleman had not been poſſeſſed of Mr. Edwards's draft five minutes, before he took occaſion to leave the room on ſome ſlight pretences, and hurried to the perſon of whom he was to receive the caſh. The habitation of Mr. Jeremy Edwards was one of the laſt in the world into which a ſtranger could get admittance: the gentle Ruth had received him at the door; and, as her maſter was abſent, had enquired into his buſineſs, but in vain. He had told her he would come again in half an hour, and determined not to return home without ſome certainty as to ſo conſiderable a ſum: he repeated this kind of viſit four times, and ſpent the intermediate periods, in no very patient humour, at Will's Coffee-houſe.

The draft had been put into his hands immediately after dinner; and as all the viſits he had made to Mr. Jeremy had been paid in the two hours ſucceeding that time, which were thoſe he always ſpent in the Park, the prudent domeſtick, though ſhe did not think it adviſeable to ſend a ſtranger to him in that place, had, from the poſſibility of her maſter's calling in at home before his going to the coffee-houſe, told the viſitor, that he might very likely ſee him, if he called again after ſuch a time.

Mr. Pliant was looking at his watch, and ſomewhat impatiently waiting for the termination of the half-hour, at the end of which he was to make his fifth viſit, when a porter delivered a letter at the bar, which he deſired might be given to Mr. Edwards with all ſpeed. Mr. Pliant had been thoroughly diſſatisfied with the appearance of every thing about uncle Jeremy's apartments; and, if he could have imagined that the owner of them could poſſibly have been known at ſo polite a coffee-houſe as this, would long before have enquired into his circumſtances

cumſtances of the lady of the houſe. He no ſooner therefore heard the name of Edwards pronounced by this meſſenger, than he walked haſtily up to the bar, and enquired whether the Mr. Edwards, for whom that letter was left, was a Mr. Jeremy Edwards, who lived in a ſtrange dungeon at the bottom of the yard: he was going to enquire who and what he was, but theſe and all farther queſtions were prevented by the arrival of another perſon, whom the name Edwards and the ſight of a letter had brought to the ſcene of enquiry almoſt as ſoon as himſelf, and who, ſtretching out a yellow, wrinkled, meagre, long-nailed, unwaſhed hand, with half the ſhirtleſs arm belonging to it from under the covert of a greaſy ſleeve, at the ſame time that he ſeized upon the letter, turned up his grey, lack-luſtre, eye to the face of the blooming Mr. Pliant, and telling him it was a dungeon into which no ſuch powdered beggars as he would ever find admittance, very coolly walked back to his ſeat, without deigning to caſt one look back upon the object of his contempt.

It was indeed with ſome kind of reaſon that Mr. Jeremy had expreſſed himſelf ſo ſeverely on this occaſion; for, additionally to the inſult conveyed by the word Dungeon in Mr. Pliant's queſtion, he could not but recollect that he had lent many ſums to people of that figure, who had brought others like themſelves in ſufficient number to join in the ſecurity, but that he had never once been paid a debt of that kind in his life, nor ever been able to find any one of the people afterwards. This had given him a very well-grounded contempt for powder and embroidery on a borrower; and, as he could not ſuppoſe there was any other buſineſs a ſtranger of this figure could poſſibly have with him, he would have been ready enough to have given him his anſwer, in the ſame kind of terms, without the additional provocation of the affront he had received.

Mr. Pliant was thoroughly diſſatisfied at the figure of the man on whom his draft was made, and as heartily mortified at the unlucky ſtep he had taken towards his acquaintance. A moment's conſideration recovered him, however, from his confuſion, and informed him that it was his buſineſs, at all events, to ſee an end of the affair he came about, before he joined his company again. He walked up to the table at which the old gentleman was ſeated, and told him, he could eaſily paſs over the incivility of his addreſs to him, as himſelf had ignorantly, and indeed rudely, been the occaſion to it; and added that, when he was at leiſure, he ſhould be glad of an opportunity of communicating to him the buſineſs he came about.

The old gentleman had broke the ſeal of his letter, and was wiping his ſpectacles in order to read it, when he received this civil ſpeech from Mr. Pliant. He continued the operation during the time he was delivering it; and for ſome minutes after, at the end of which he very deliberately put them on, and without beſtowing a word, or even a look on the beau, opened and began to read the letter.

Mr. Pliant, who was now ſenſible enough that it was not his buſineſs to put the old fellow out of humour, ſat patiently while he read it; which, as he did it very deliberately, and as the letter conſiſted of three ſides, and was not written in the beſt hand in the world, took up no very ſmall portion of time: when he had got to the bottom of the laſt page, he very calmly turned it over, and inſtead of folding it up as Mr. Pliant had expected, began to read it again. The beau ſtill kept his patience, though under the additional provocation of having the eyes of the whole company upon him; and being very ſenſible that his complaiſance would be conſtrued, by many of them who knew him, not greatly to his advantage. At length, the old gentleman having finiſhed the ſecond peruſal of his letter, carefully folded it up, and taking off his ſpectacles, looked full in the face of Mr. Pliant, and ſaid—'I tell you, friend, it don't ſig-'nify waiting; I won't lend you a far-'thing.'

This was ſpoke ſo loud, that Mr. Pliant found it neceſſary, in order to clear his own honour, to do a thing which prudence would otherwiſe have pleaded very ſtrongly againſt, and to anſwer him as loud—'Sir, I have a draft of 'eight hundred pounds on you, from 'your nephew, for money lent him: 'will you pay it or not?'

The name of eight hundred pounds, advanced to his nephew by any body but himſelf, raiſed the old fellow in a poſture of horror from his ſeat: he looked upon Pliant as a man who had robbed

bed him of the intereſt of that ſum at fifty per cent. and that had laid a ſcheme for ſupplanting him in all his future deſigns upon the young fellow: his face increaſed it's length by two inches; a palſy could not have ſhook his whole frame more violently, than this unexpected attack did; his ſpectacles dropped from his unnerved hand, and though they broke in the fall, he never remembered that it would coſt a ſhilling to mend them. He ſtood ſpeechleſs in this agony for ſome moments; but, Mr. Pliant at length repeating his queſtion aloud, the old fellow recovered the uſe of his voice enough to anſwer—No! I'll never 'pay it: he knows he might have any 'money he pleaſed of me, and I don't 'underſtand how you came by this.' Mr. Pliant, who had been thoroughly provoked by the preceding behaviour of the old fellow, grew outrageous at this ſuſpicion of his honour; a quality about which it is obſerved, that thoſe people are always moſt ſolicitous who have leaſt of it. He did not condeſcend to anſwer, but, riſing on tip-toes for the blow, levelled a ſtroke with his cane at the old fellow's head, which would, in all probability, have put a period to his exiſtence much ſooner than the laws of this hiſtory require, had it not been ſtopped, in it's deſcent, by the arm of a plain-dreſſed, grave man, who ſat juſt behind; and who, ſeeing the miſchief that was coming, received no inconſiderable hurt in the preventing it. The ſtranger was for pleading in favour of the uncle, that the care of his nephew might very well be an excuſe for what he had ſaid; when Pliant, making no doubt that he, who had taken ſuch a blow without reſentment, would bear more, turned all the torrent of his fury on the new object.

The ſtranger ſeized his arm with a very rude gripe, as the firſt blow was coming, and directing his foot to a part in which Hudibras very whimſically ſuppoſes honour to be lodged, raiſed his light antagoniſt, by the force of the kick, aloft from the ground, which he did not reach again till at about four yards diſtance, and then not in an erect poſture.

The beau, as ſoon as he had got up on his legs again, told the ſtranger he deſired to ſpeak two words to him; which he had no ſooner whiſpered in his ear, than the other anſwered aloud—'I 'have no reaſon to believe you'll keep 'your appointment: does any body here 'know you?' Here was a queſtion, in which Mr. Pliant's honour was again concerned, and which his intereſt had alſo ſome connection with. He ſaw people enough who knew him, but not one on whoſe good opinion he could depend in regard to his claim to the debt; till at length he obſerved a brother of the lay, as they expreſs it, at one of the tables, whom he had not ſeen before, and who was no other than the foreigner who had made young Edwards acquainted with Sparkle, and had ſtripped him afterwards of ſomewhat more than his original allowance. Pliant's eyes were no ſooner fixed on this gentleman, than, depending on that honour which ſubſiſts between all the perſons of this ſtamp—'There,' ſays he, 'there is a gentleman whom I have the 'honour to be known to, and who was 'preſent at George's when I lent the 'money about which all this diſpute 'has been.' If the uncle had looked on Pliant as a man who was robbing him of the advantages he might make of the extravagances of his nephew, this gentleman, who had ſeen that happy adventurer carry the youth off from the Park the morning before, and who now found what uſe he had made of the acquaintance, received him with a ſtill more hateful eye; he would perhaps have kept his ſecrets at another time, or would not have ſcrupled to have lied, or been perjured, for him: but here was a caſe which touched himſelf too nearly. Honour, when not founded on honeſty, is but an imaginary exiſtence; intereſt now pleaded againſt the adherence to it, on the foreigner's part; and he replied without heſitation, that he knew Mr. Pliant very well; that he did not pretend to ſay any thing in regard to the diſpute with that gentleman; 'but, Sir,' ſays he, addreſſing himſelf to the uncle, 'I never ſaw him lend any money to your 'nephew; and as to the draft, I don't 'doubt but it is for a play-debt, and I 'think you ſhould enquire farther into the 'gentleman's character, before you pay 'it.'

Pliant, who had very unhappily miſtaken his man in the former attack, knew ſo much of this knight of the induſtry, that he determined at once to revenge his quarrel, and eſtabliſh his reputation again at his expence. He fell violently

violently on him, first with his cane, and afterwards with his fists. The other was the stronger, though Pliant was the more active: many a hard blow was given on each side, and Victory had hung out her scales in exact equilibrio for a considerable time; when at length a trip over one of the benches having brought Monsieur Le Guardien to the ground, and every body calling out, that it was unfair to beat him when he was down; the usurer flew to the assistance of his routed champion, and made so excellent a use of those weapons with which we have before had occasion to observe the extremities of his fingers were armed by nature, that Mr. Pliant's face was in an instant covered with blood and wounds; and the pain which was too much for a man of his delicate and tender nerves to bear, obliged him to put an end to the combat.

CHAP. II.

A VISIT FROM THE FRIEND OF OUR HERO TO MR. PLIANT: THE STRANGE CONSEQUENCES IT WAS ATTENDED WITH.

IT is very beneficent of Providence, that, amidst the vast portion of knowledge we boast of having been favoured with from her, we have no immediate means of receiving notices of events beyond the reach of our senses. Though the scene of Mr. Pliant's distress was scarce a hundred yards from his own house, every circumstance of it was as profound a secret to every body at home as if it had happened in the dominions of the Great Mogul: every thing there was in the usual innocent tranquillity; a visitor had accidentally dropped in, who supplied the place of Mr. Pliant at a corner of a whist-table; and the family were stripping the unfortunate Mr. Edwards, as usual, and comforting him with the certain amends he was to receive in the fortune and virtues of a wife; when a single rap at the door called up the footman from the arms of his Mauxalind, and he immediately ushered in a person who declared himself a stranger to the family, but had insisted on speaking with Mr. Edwards that instant.

The company were strangely alarmed at the entrance of a plain figure of a man, with so odd an introduction; imagining from the circumstances, that he could be no other than one of those officers of justice, with the nature of whose visits the swift vicissitudes of Mr. Pliant's fortune had made every body that belonged to him sufficiently acquainted. They were rising in confusion from the table, when Mr. Edwards, whose surprize was of a very different kind, dropped his cards, and in an instant throwing his arms about the neck of the stranger, who was indeed no other than Mr. Spence, poured forth a profusion of transport, intermingled with complaints of his having so long absented himself from him.

His friend answered, that he had no right to shew himself before him, even now, according to the terms of their parting, nor indeed could have any: that he did not blame, but compassionate him for the conditions under which he had offered to renew their acquaintance, which, he acknowledged, were altogether equitable, though impracticable. Our hero stopped him, as he was going on in these explanations, with a thousand protestations of his sense of his own folly, of his unhappiness while he had lost his acquaintance, and of his resolutions never to part with him again. The company were very happy in the different opinion they now took up of the stranger, and were congratulating themselves on the change of the scene, when a thundering knock at the door ushered in the master of the family, in the lamentable situation we have before pictured him, as he arose from under the talons of uncle Jeremy; and with the additional horror of a black eye, which he had received from the other combatant.

The face of distress, with which Mr. Pliant entered his parlour, was raised into tenfold horror, on his seeing the person there whom we have just mentioned, as added to the company: he sunk into a chair; and, while the family were all gathering about him, commanded silence with his hand; while Mr. Spence, who was still addressing his discourse to his friend, went on in this manner—'Though I have no 'right, Mr. Edwards, to claim your 'friendship on these conditions, I have 'obligations to you, which, had I no

'better

'better motive to it, could not let me 'ſtand by and ſee you injured. I came 'hither to you from a place where 'three raſcals (I am ſorry to tell you, 'that your uncle, who either did not, 'or would not know me, is one; and 'this gentleman, who is paying ſo care-'ful an attention to my diſcourſe, 'another of them) were quarrelling who 'ſhould have the ſole privilege of ſtrip-'ping you of every farthing yourſelf 'or your father could be worth: I left 'them executing a juſt vengeance on 'one another; and during their ſcuffle, 'having learned who this gentleman 'was, and that you was at this time 'with him, have ventured, even into 'his own houſe, to do you ſervice.'

Mr. Pliant, whom partly loſs of blood, and partly a ſenſe of his preſent ſituation, had rendered, by this time, much cooler than when he had engaged in the ſcuffle at the coffee-houſe, now would have condeſcended to attempt to reaſon with the friend of our hero; but that gentleman anſwered him very coolly and ſhortly—'Sir, there is a point you 'and I are to ſettle hereafter, and which 'no art, no evaſion, on your part, ſhall 'put off: I know you have no great 'ſtomach to it; but there is but one con-'dition on which I ſhall excuſe you, 'which is, your giving up to this gen-'tleman the draft you juſt now offer-'ed to his uncle, and, with it, whatever 'elſe you have, as you will chuſe to 'phraſe it, *won* of him. I ſhall be for 'giving it a harſher name; and I ſhall 'add this to the diſadvantages of your 'refuſal, that I ſhall make this circum-'ſtance ſo publick, that you will never 'have ſuch another opportunity of ex-'erting your ſkill in your profeſſion.'

Mr. Pliant, though he cocked his hat fiercely, and could talk loud upon occaſion, had a natural averſion to cold iron: he ſaw his antagoniſt, in this affair, was a hardy, ſevere, unmerciful fellow; and adding, to his regard to his perſon, the circumſtance of the publick and irretrievable loſs of his character, which he was threatened with, he came to a reſolution, that it was better to loſe the advantages of this one incident, than to part with the proſpect of all that could hereafter offer to him: he gave up the draft, paid back all the money he had won, and, on Mr. Edwards's making ſome ſcruple about taking it back, confeſſed that he had not obtained it fairly of him; and took his leave of the friend, with telling him—'Sir, 'you are a man of honour; and, now I 'have made reparation, I know you 'will never mention this.' Mr. Spence gave him no anſwer; but our hero promiſed ſo much in his name, and the party immediately broke up. The maſter of the houſe kept his bed for a fortnight; and Mr. Spence was, though with ſome difficulty, prevailed with to accompany his reſcued friend to his houſe.

CHAP. III.

THE GRATITUDE OF A MISER.

UNCLE Jeremy, though he could very well reconcile it to his conſcience to keep out of his nephew's way while he was ſquandering his money, could by no means ſuffer himſelf to be abſent while other people were encroaching upon his prerogative of cheating him. He had no ſooner got at liberty from the broil at the coffee-houſe, than he made the beſt of his way to his houſe: he had been waiting an hour in the dining-room, when our hero and his friend arrived; they were walking in with great chearfulneſs and good-humour, when the uncle's face, now rendered infinitely more diſagreeable by the frown it appeared dreſſed in, forbade the banns of pleaſure for that time.

He was entering with great vehemence on the ſubject of his viſit, when our hero, to put the ſhorteſt end poſſible to ſo diſagreeable an entertainment, produced the draft which he had recovered, and immediately after laid down the money and bills he had received back with it: 'All this, Sir,' ſaid he, 'I have 'indeed been defrauded of; but I have 'recovered it again by the friendſhip of 'this gentleman, to whom I had before 'a thouſand obligations, which you 'will now be aſhamed of having com-'pelled me to make a ſhameful return 'for.'

The old fellow aſſiſted his nephew in gathering up the money and papers, and ſaw him lock them ſafe up before he ſpoke a ſyllable. As ſoon as this was done—'You have been obliged to this 'gentleman, you ſay, for getting back 'your

'your money, and you shall be obliged 'to me for preserving it; he has only 'got it back from t'other rogue, that 'he may plunder you of it himself: I 'knew him well enough at the coffee-'house, though I did not care to say any 'thing to him whilst he was taking my 'part; but I have heard from every 'body, that he has no visible way of 'living; and you may depend upon it, 'he'll never leave you, so long as you 'have a penny he can strip you of.' The old fellow proceeded to insist upon his nephew's never seeing his friend again; and added many threatenings to give him up entirely, and to write word to his father to send for him back, if he did not discard him that instant.

Mr. Spence was silent: there was nothing for him to say to a person so infinitely below his resentment, and so nearly allied to his friend. The young fellow, whose heart was naturally full of gratitude and generosity, and, at this time, was elevated to an uncommon height, by the joy of finding his lost friend, and the sense of the obligations he had to him, could not bear it with so much patience: he bestowed some harsh words on the uncle, and insisted on his leaving the house that moment. The old man would have found it difficult to have calmed this storm, or prevented it's effects; but Mr. Spence very generously and prudently put a period to it, by declaring he would go himself: 'Your uncle, Sir,' says he, 'unjust and 'brutish as he is to me, has nothing but 'the care of your affairs in his thoughts; 'and, whatever reason I have to be 'provoked at his treatment, you have 'nothing to accuse him of but error.' All the solicitations in the world could not prevail with this gentleman to stay longer, than till he had, in some degree, reconciled the uncle and nephew; nor would he so much as say where he should afterwards be heard of. He knew the father's temper so well, that he was too sensible of the effect a complaint from the uncle would have, to give the least pretext or occasion for it. The uncle, after some more altercation, went home, and the hero of our story to bed; but too full of thought to leave any possibility of his receiving from it the usual refreshment.

CHAP. IV.

A CONVERSATION IN ST. JAMES'S PARK.

THE loss of so worthy, so noble a friend, as Mr. Spence, left no room in our hero's breast for any thoughts, but those of the means of recovering him. Where to seek after his lodgings he was wholly ignorant: he knew him so entire a stranger in town, that an enquiry after him by name would be ridiculous; nor was there any hope of meeting him either on visits, or at publick diversions, both which he had heard him declare an utter aversion to.

He had spent the whole morning in hearty uneasiness on this subject, when a servant, who attended him as he was dressing, and who had been present at the conflict of the night before, guessing that this might be the source of his present disquiet, told him, that he had several times met that gentleman alone in the Park about noon, and that he fancied he always walked there at that time.

His master gave him a guinea for the intelligence; assumed a look of ease and chearfulness, that he had not put on the whole morning before; hurried on his cloaths, and drove immediately to St. James's Gate.

He had scarce set his foot in the first walk, when an inarticulate noise, probably more like that heard upon the instant of the confusion of tongues at Babel than any thing else in history, called his eye toward the occasion of it: he had no sooner faced about, than he found himself in the midst of the jovial party from whom it came, which consisted of eight people, four of each sex, who had arranged themselves together, a man and a woman alternately; and, joining hands like children at thread-needle, formed a straight line that reached across the Mall, and consequently turned every body they met into one of the other walks.

On the right were Lady Sophist and Dr. Killdarby, engaged anew in the famous dispute concerning the immortality of the soul; the lady having greatly

ſtrengthened herſelf by ſince reading Mr. Toland's Pantheiſticon; and the doctor having picked up many arguments on his ſide from a paper entitled, The Inſpector. At the other extremity of the line were the ladies, who have choſen to diſtinguiſh themſelves lately by the very expreſſive names of the Bold Thunder and the Briſk Lightning, ſeparated by a half-powdered beau. of the firſt magnitude; on the left of Dr. Killdarby, walked the ſober, the diſcreet, the pretty Miſs Sedate—we join heartily with the gentle reader in wondering how ſhe got into ſuch company—and in the centre were poſted the egregious Mr. Dupe and the elegant Lady Bloom.

As our hero had turned upon them, they put a forced period to a very loud laugh, which it was not proper he ſhould know was at his expence: they had diſcovered him at his firſt entrance into the Park; and as Lady Bloom had been fully let into the nature of the hum ſet on foot by Mr. Pliant, and had, on this occaſion, very good-naturedly communicated it to the company, it had been reſolved to make him the ſubject of their entertainment on this topick for the morning.

As the party extended quite acroſs the walk, it was eaſy to pretend they could not let him into the chain; and as he found it impoſſible to retreat, after he had once faced about upon them, eſpecially as Lady Bloom was of the party, he took his poſt ſolely in front of the line, expoſed to attacks from every part of it. That the onſet might not be too groſs, the company eaſily underſtood one another's minds, and continued the ſubjects of converſation they had been diverted from by the arrival of this new object. Lady Sophiſt urged her new-learned arguments with an irreſiſtible force on the modeſt doctor; Mr. Dupe was relating to Lady Bloom the victory that a hundred and fifty of his companions had obtained over ſix people, and the intrepidity with which they had dragged the hero of the adverſe party, like Hector behind the car of Achilles, through a horſepond; and the Briſk Lightning, a lady who has had her ſhare of praiſe once already in this hiſtory, was attacking the beau, who walked on her left, on his cruelty to the fineſt creature in the world, who had nothing in her that he could except againſt, but that ſhe loved him. The beau enjoyed the attack as the higheſt of all human praiſe; he looked with contempt and deteſtation to the whole ſex, and reſolutely anſwered—'As excellent an advocate as you are, Madam, you will plead in vain on this ſubject, if you ſpeak for ever. I know the B—— for a tyrant of old; many an honeſt fellow's heart has ached to no purpoſe for her: I except the preſent company, Madam; elſe, damn 'em, 'tis the way of them all: and we, who have any little ſhare of merit, ought to treat them accordingly, and revenge the quarrel of the ſex upon them.'

This was a fair opening for the ſettled buſineſs of the ſcene. 'Mr. Edwards,' ſays Lady Bloom, with a dying look, and a moſt amiable diſcompoſure of face, 'you are not of that 'brute's opinion, I hope: if a lady of 'any degree of merit ſhould have diſcernment enough to ſee you were worthy a paſſion of this kind, you would 'not devote her to deſtruction in this 'barbarous manner.' The ſatisfaction of the whole company was too evident on this attack, not to inform our youth, who did not want apprehenſion on theſe occaſions, that they were parties concerned in the queſtion: if he could have doubted this, the eagerneſs with which they waited his reply would have confirmed him in it; and the utter diſregard paid to all the other private diſputes of the reſt of the party, from the inſtant Lady Bloom had opened her mouth, gave him full conviction that he was to be ſhewn off for the diverſion of the company. He determined to give into it to the utmoſt, till he found an opportunity of retorting the deſign upon herſelf to ſufficient advantage: he anſwered with a great deal of coolneſs, that the caſe would be by no means parallel: that if a lady ſhould honour him with a paſſion that could only have it's rational ſource from ſuch accompliſhments as that gentleman was happy in poſſeſſing, he ſhould rather condemn her taſte, than take pride in the imaginary effects of his own merit.

'Eh! Badinage!' replies the lady, with infinite affectation—'Come, come, 'you know there is not a prettier fellow 'in town than yourſelf; and you very 'well know an unhappy acquaintance 'of mine is too ſenſible of it. I ſeriouſly

'beg

'beg you to declare before this company, 'that you may not think of going back 'from it, what it is that you intend to do 'with her?'—'Every thing in the world, 'Madam,' replied the youngſter, 'but 'believe her. Your ladyſhip will par-'don me,' continued he; 'but I cannot 'help obſerving, this is the laſt ſubject 'in the world that you are formed for 'ſhining on in converſation.'—'I find, 'Sir,' replies the lady, with a downcaſt look, and a very well affected ſigh, 'you 'have really all that brutality in your 'heart that this other flighty monſter 'only affects to put on.' The company were whiſpering, that Lady Bloom ſhone away glorioufly this morning; that nothing ever came ſo near reality as this confuſion; and were every one of them beginning to hate her heartily for her ſuperior talents at this glorious art, when ſhe continued, in a faultering tone—'Tis barbarous in you, Mr. Edwards, 'to be trifling on ſuch a ſerious ſubject. 'Suppoſe, Sir, I were to tell you——' The manner in which ſhe pronounced this broken ſentence, added vaſtly to the applauſe of the company, and to their envy. Lady Sophiſt, out of all patience to be conquered thus openly in her favourite art, could not help hinting, that ſhe wiſhed they were not all hummed, except the young fellow. 'For my 'part,' ſays ſhe, 'when art comes ſo 'very near nature, I ſhall always be apt 'to gueſs there is nature at the bottom.' The company had not time to deliver their ſentiments on this intereſting ſubject, before the youth, who now ſaw the opportunity he had all this time been waiting for, went up cloſe to Lady Bloom, and in a whiſper, which he took care all the company ſhould hear, told her—'I am amazed, Madam, you will 'urge me in publick on a ſubject I have 'ſo honeſtly told you my heart about 'already. I know I am in the wrong; 'but of all womankind, charming as 'you are, you are the laſt I could think 'of with tenderneſs.'

It was not Mr. Edwards's buſineſs to wait for an anſwer to this declaration; he turned off upon his heel, and left the company without ceremony. Lady Bloom was mad with rage; but in hopes the company had not heard what had been ſaid to her, and which it was by no means her buſineſs to repeat, ſhe remained ſilent. The reſt of the party were no fonder of talking about a thing they did not wiſh to ſee placed in a better light; they dropped off one by one; and ſuch hearty pains did they take to let the world into the ſecret they had juſt diſcovered at their morning viſits, that there was not a card-table within the hundreds of St. James's, at which it was not perfectly known that evening that Lady Bloom was in love with a young Creole to deſperation; and that he did not like her, nor would by any means be induced to viſit her, or ſtay any where in her company.

CHAP. V.

CHARACTER OF A VERY AMIABLE LADY; WHOM THE READER WILL SEE MR. EDWARDS IS IN A FAIR WAY TO BE VERY WELL ACQUAINTED WITH.

IT may be remembered that, in the liſt of the party our hero met with in the Mall, we mentioned a lady whom we expreſſed our wonder at ſeeing in ſuch company. Mr. Edwards began in reality, by this time, to look on his late flame, Lady Bloom, with all the contempt he had but affected at their laſt rencounter. The other celebrated belles of the party did not appear to him in a much more favourable light: but it was much otherwiſe in regard to this ſingular lady; her ſenſible diſcourſe, her decent deportment, her amiable diffidence, and a thouſand other good qualities, which thoſe who know Miſs Sedate—and, indeed, who is it that does not?—will know it is needleſs to mention, added to the artillery of her looks, which never failed to command the adoration they ſeemed not to deſire to receive, had taken deeper hold of his heart than any thing he had yet met with in the European quarter of the globe.

We ſhall not preſume to call his ſenſations, in regard to this lady, abſolute love; perhaps that is a paſſion the human breaſt is capable of but once: certainly, all the emotions he had felt on theſe occaſions among our women of face and faſhion, were much inferior in their force and tenderneſs to thoſe he had been inſpired with by Miſs Wentworth. From the time of his receiving the news of that lady's death, he had bid farewel to all thoughts of a paſſion like that which he had felt for her; but as he had

no intention to live among mankind not like one of the ſpecies, he had given way to every effort that ſeemed at all of kin to his firſt thoughts on this ſubject; and perhaps had been as much in love with Lady Bloom and Miſs Sparkle, as a modern fine gentleman ever is in love with any thing.

His ideas of Miſs Sedate aroſe to ſomething conſiderably more like adoration than what he had felt on either of theſe occaſions; and, if they did not come up to abſolute love, they had a combination of deſire and eſteem that approached conſiderably near it.

He found means of enquiring after her of all the party in which he had met her, but he found not one of them, except Lady Bloom alone, knew any thing of her, and that ſhe would not tell. He had with ſome difficulty got her name; and he was ſo aſſiduous in his enquiries in all parts of the town, and among all ſorts of people, that he at length found it belonged to a daughter of a very eminent perſon in the philoſophick world, and whoſe perſonal merit had raiſed him to the dignity of head of a body of men among whom points of this nature were diſputed and determined.

Every body joined in giving her a character, that at once increaſed his admiration, and convinced him ſhe was of all women the beſt formed for making a huſband and a family happy. His fortune was ſuch as her relations, he knew, could not object to; his reputed eſtate, ſuch as muſt gain him an admittance every where. The lady's circumſtances he learned, on enquiry, were ſuch as his father would have no reaſon to be diſſatisfied with. He reſolved to marry, and he determined on this lady as the woman.

With all theſe previous conſiderations ſettled, he had determined on the next day for the ceremony of waiting on her father. In the evening before, he by perfect accident met with his friend again: to him he unboſomed his whole plan; and he was extremely happy in finding this gentleman perfectly well knew the father of the lady, and could have given him all the information he had already been at ſuch pains to obtain. He found, indeed, that he knew much more of the family than any body he had hitherto ſpoke with on the ſubject: he entreated him to inform him of every thing that he knew of it without reſerve; and Mr. Spence complied with his requeſt in the following manner:

'Mr. Sedate, the father of the lady you intend your addreſſes to, is a man of family, character, and fortune. His reputation in the world, as a man of ſenſe, is unexceptionable; and his eſtate is not leſs than three thouſand pounds a year. The only failing in his moral character is, that he is eaſily impoſed on by people whom he thinks well of; and, when miſled, is incapable of being ſet right again: and the only one in his œconomy is, the engaging in an expenſive office, which the world at this time are hardly in a humour to allow an honourable one. I give you theſe hints, that you may take care to be well with his friends, whom I will point out to you; and that you may not expect your miſtreſs's fortune to be much enlarged by the ſavings of a man whom you do not ſee guilty of any extravagance.

'There is an elder daughter of the family, a widow, who married indiſcreetly, and who, in conſequence of the irreconcileable temper of the father, will never be received again, or diſturb the poſſeſſion which this unmarried one has of his heart. He doats on her, and ſhe deſerves it. He would, I believe, be averſe to any immediate propoſal of marriage, from his mere unwillingneſs to part with her; but there is a way by which you may ſucceed. In order to court the lady with ſucceſs, you muſt firſt court him; and, to court him with ſucceſs, you muſt attack him on his weak ſide, his fondneſs for philoſophy. Offer yourſelf, with your whole fortune in your hand, and you will be turned out of doors; but carry him a petrified cockle-ſhell, or a dried toadſtool, and you ſhall be received into his arms; and he will beſtow the darling of his heart upon you, as the only medal worthy to reward ſuch unequalled diſcoveries.'

Mr. Spence was indeed thoroughly acquainted with the family he talked of, and the advice he gave had all the appearance of reaſon on it's ſide. Whether he did not foreſee ſome farther effect from it than can yet appear to the reader, or whether indeed he wiſhed the young gentleman to ſucceed in his addreſſes to the lady or not, are ſecrets that may poſſibly be diſcloſed in the ſequel of the hiſtory. The youth determined to follow

low his advice; but he trembled at the thought of appearing before such a master of a science he had never studied, in quality of an admirer of it. The friend who had advised him thus far did not desert him in this necessity: he engaged himself to furnish him with a subject, and put him in the way of knowing what to say about it; and even promised to set him on the best footing imaginable in the family, by making the acquaintance be of Mr. Sedate's own seeking. To this purpose he told him he would introduce him, on the next publick day, to a person in office, under this head of the Philosophick Body; where that gentleman sometimes condescended to visit, and where he would, if he missed seeing him, be accustomed, however, to philosophick discourses, by hearing all the eminent men of the body delivering their sentiments with great familiarity. The youth professed eternal obligation to his friend and patron; and they parted, for the first time, with knowing where they were to meet again.

CHAP. VI.

CHARACTER OF DR. SINGLEDOSE. SHORT MENTION OF MRS. SINGLEDOSE, AND THE PLAN OF THEIR PUBLICK ENTERTAINMENTS.

THE gentleman, whose publick day was to give our hero an opportunity of commencing philosopher, and meeting the father of his mistress by accident, was himself a *Primi Subsellii Philosophus*. He had many years enjoyed an office in the learned body we have already had several occasions of mentioning; but with this great advantage over his patron, that while that gentleman's finances paid the full price of his honour, this officer was paid for making himself ridiculous. He was a physician as well as philosopher: by long study and experience he had arrived at a perfection in the latter science equal to that he had in the former; and his utmost modesty could not suppress his pride in declaring that, as he unravelled all the intricacies of philosophy at one examination, so he cured all diseases by a single dose of his nostrums.

He had gone so far at one time, as to offer himself to families by the year, as physician; and to engage to cure them of all diseases, one way or other, at a guinea a head, or, as the poet admirably expresses it—

> 'At one pound one per head, per ann. ye 'small
> 'And great, the Doctor kills or cures you 'all.'

But whether the world thought this was an imposition, as a single dose might be had for half that money, and every person in a family could not expect in reason to be sick every year; or whether the physicians, who saw the inevitable ruin of their profession by this scheme conspired against it, we know not; but so it was, that the ingenious gentleman never found opportunities of doing much good or harm on these terms.

The doctor, after some other ill successes of a like kind, determined to set out in a new way of acquiring business. Poetry and Painting had long been declared sister sciences; Philosophy and Physick he was perfectly convinced were no less so: to be eminent in one, he concluded would prove him not of the meanest rank in the other. His office in the supreme court of philosophick judicature gave him an indisputable claim to rank high on this subject: he took care to inform the world of his importance, by publishing his titles at full length, distinguishing himself as *associate* to this body that he had never seen, *fellow* of that community which nobody else had ever heard of, and *correspondent* of a certain very venerable old lady, to whom he had written a letter that she never answered.

His fame was no sooner blazoned in this manner to the world, than he established this publick day for the reception of his friends. Cards were dispersed to all parts of the town, expressing that Dr. Singledose gave tea every Tuesday afternoon at five precisely; and it being whispered about at the same time, that the seven sages of Great Britain always met at that place and hour, there seldom failed to be rather more company than there were chairs for in one apartment; and a crowd of female listeners about the keyhole of the door, that communicated with an adjoining one, especially on those nights when a hermaphrodite, or some other phenomenon which concerned the sexes, was to be the subject of disquisition; which the doctor's lady, a personage whom, though we have hitherto

taken

taken no notice of, we may poſſibly have occaſion to mention hereafter, never failed to give timely notice of about the neighbourhood, and among the circle of her acquaintance.

On one of theſe evenings it was, that Mr. Spence was to introduce his young friend to the acquaintance of Dr. Singledoſe, and by his means to the whole learned world. As he was to preſent him as a lover of natural knowledge, he took no leſs than four days to inſtruct him in the terms and rudiments of the ſcience; and having furniſhed him with a ſpecimen, which was no other than a *dried whiting*, that had been part of the ſhip's ſtores, he aſſured him of the ſucceſs of his undertaking.

CHAP. VII.

A CONVERSATION AT A PHILOSOPHICAL CLUB INTERRUPTED BY A VERY SURPRIZING INCIDENT.

A Very eminent and accompliſhed clergyman, I remember, has told me, that on his firſt introduction into a family of conſequence, on which he had much dependence, he was informed, about two hours before the time of praying to the family, that this was to be done extempore, not according to the church form. He beſtowed, as he tells the ſtory, all the intermediate time in preparing his prayer: but, the moment the great bell gave the ſignal for his entering the chapel, every idea he had before formed deſerted him; his thoughts were as utterly unprepared as if that had been the firſt moment of his having notice of his buſineſs, and he was forced to begin at random.

So fared it with our young philoſopher at his firſt viſit to this publick receiver of the wiſe. The four days of his preparation had been ſpent to at leaſt as good purpoſe as the two hours of the reverend gentleman juſt mentioned, and he had got together as many words as the other had ideas: but no ſooner did the weighty hoſt take him by the hand, and welcome him to the regions of wiſdom, than every ſyllable he had got by heart was obliterated; and he, who could before have rolled glibly over his tongue the *Titanoceratophyton* and *Hypophyllo-cono-carpodendron* of Boerhaave; the *Coriotragemataſandros* of Plukenet; the *Caraſceron* and *Galeobdolon* of Rivinus; the *Clathroidaſtrum* of Micheli; the *Achrochordodendros* of Knaut; or the *Antaſtriformipolyplatycarpoides* of Klein; the *Arbitochoutus* of Vaillant; and the *Stachiſarpogophora* of Breynins; now could not have told that *bellis* was Latin for a daiſy, or *fungus* for a muſhroom, if the ſaving of his ſoul, or, what was much more to him at preſent, the gaining of his miſtreſs, had depended upon it. He found it would be neceſſary for him to ſay little; and, venturing to tell the doctor that, as this was the firſt night of his having the honour of meeting ſuch company, he ſhould be a hearer only during the courſe of the evening, the maſter of the ceremony repeated the reſolution to the company; who taking it as a tacit encomium on their own qualifications, readily accepted the excuſe, and ſaid many civil things about the fair preſage ſuch modeſty gave of riſing merit.

Mr. Edwards was, on the recommendation of Mr. Spence, who was a man of allowed judgment, now dubbed a philoſopher; and was very regularly and methodically introduced to every member of the company, in their ſeveral ranks and orders; which (excepting for the deference paid to a foreigner of diſtinction in the firſt ſalute) was not according to title or ſeniority, but in conſequence of the number of learned performances each had obliged the world with.

As our hero had before been informed of this right of priority in theſe meetings, he was ſtrangely ſurprized at being firſt introduced to a gay, ſmiling, bold-faced, powdered-periwig'd fellow, who had hitherto been talking of nothing but his Burgundy and his miſtreſs; and not leſs ſo, to find the liſt cloſed with the doctor himſelf, who, though he had obliged the world ſo far as, many years before, to engage for a folio or two, had not thought it convenient yet to be at the pains of writing, or the expence of printing them; and who, though he had certainly had ſome ſort of ſhare in the publication of more books than any one ſince that time, at preſent valued himſelf principally on a folio collection of tobacco-papers, which he confeſſed, as he took his new friend by the hand, were not yet ready for the preſs, in the form in which he intended to favour the world with them.

The company, for this evening, conſiſted of a Spaniſh Count, attended by Madam

Madam *Le Compteſſe*, and a led captain, whoſe mouth was drawn into a peculiar form by the frequent pronouncing of three words, *Cet illuſtre Chef*, which always made at leaſt two-thirds of his whole converſation, though he never failed to ſeize the opportunity of a ceſſation on other parts, to deſcribe the magnanimity of conduct, the hardſhips or diſtreſſes, of his *illuſtre* companion. Next to theſe ſat the powdered doctor already mentioned, who had obliged the world with many volumes of all ſorts, on all kinds of ſubjects; and had written juſt as well of any one, as of any other of them. At the upper end of the room ſtood an empty arm-chair for the father of our hero's miſtreſs. The reſt was filled ſomewhat indiſcriminately, with philoſophers, antiquarians, mathematicians, and mechanicks. A Scotch peaſant produced a new orrery; a German mechanick, a table-fountain contrived to play in a deſſert, to the great entertainment, and bedabbling of every body preſent; and the doctor's ſon and heir, the model of a new invented mouſe-trap. The audience conſiſted of the doctor's taylor; an Anabaptiſt preacher; a converted Jew who ſold ſpectacles; an Atheiſt and two Roman Catholicks; a blind fidler, who fully expected he ſhould be reſtored to ſight by the doctor's noſtrums; and the maſter and miſtreſs of a pamphlet-ſhop at Charing Croſs, with whom his works, entire, were always to be met with.

The people who ſpoke beſide the abovementioned, were Mr. Storm, the inventor of a new religion; Mr. Farthing, a collector of a peculiar ſpecies of Engliſh coins; Mr. Sage, the author of a very egregious hiſtory of printing, in which one of Swift's prophecies is given as a ſpecimen of the letter of one of our earlieſt printers; and a Maker of Bologna Sauſages, who had diſcovered the longitude.

Mr. Farthing took the advantage of the firſt ceſſation on the part of the illuſtrious Spaniard, to declare to the company that, after having been now eight years in ſearch of a *maidenhead*; after having been promiſed one by fifty of the common dealers in thoſe commodities; after having had fifty counterfeit ones brought to him, all which he diſcovered to be cheats the inſtant he got into the legends; in ſhort, after having ten times overpaid Mr. C—— ten times as much as a true one would have been worth, for pretended ones; and, after having ſought for one in vain among your pretended people of honour, he had at length met with a genuine one, in the poſſeſſion of a cinder-ſifter, upon one of the dung-hills behind St. Giles's, which he had taken poſſeſſion of upon the ſpot for one and ſix-pence.

The antiquarian was in raptures, and ſome other of the company could not forbear licking their lips at the relation. Half a dozen of them were gathering at once about the happy man, to be let into more particulars of the ſtory, when a dreadful thundering from the room above at once terrified and aſtoniſhed the whole aſſembly: ſome imagined it the report of a chymical veſſel, burſt in one of the doctor's furnaces; others took it for the ſhock of a third earthquake, the noiſes of the two former having been evidently perceived over-head; a great proof of the propriety of the term by which they were expreſſed. The doctor turned pale as death, and plainly enough diſcovered that he underſtood it to be ſomething more terrible than either; the Anabaptiſt declared it was a judgment for Mr. Farthing's prophane ſpeaking; and the Atheiſt was diſcovered, after ſome moments, lying at his length under the table, and repeating the Apoſtles Creed. During this interval of ſilence and confuſion, a ſervant had entered the room with terror in his aſpect; but, before he could deliver his meſſage, the company were thrown into a more violent conſternation than the former, by a repetition of the ſame ſound, only more vehement, and longer continued.

We doubt not, gentle reader, but thou art eager to know what this tremendous noiſe was; but as we do not uſe to make great preparations for trivial events, nor call in gods or devils to our aſſiſtance,

'*Niſi dignus vindice nodus*;'

thy patience muſt be ſuſpended till, on ſo important an occaſion as this, we begin a new chapter.

CHAP. VIII.

AN EXPLANATION OF THE TERRIBLE ALARM GIVEN IN THE LAST CHAPTER.

IT was a quarter after eight, in the month of October, when the company at Doctor Singledoſe's drum (who had

had patiently enough gone without their tea, on being informed that the lady of the houſe had gone out upon a viſit, and had inadvertently locked up the cups) received the alarm of the ſound which had broke in upon Mr. Farthing's important relation, and ſo utterly diſconcerted the company at the end of the laſt chapter. The doctor, on this repetition of it, had, however, greatly calmed every body's terrors, by ordering the ſervant, who all this while ſtood trembling before them, to tell the gentleman above that he was engaged in ſuch a manner with his friends, on a very ſerious ſubject, that he could not poſſibly come up juſt that minute, but would wait on him preſently.

The company had ſcarcely time to congratulate themſelves on the diſcovery that this noiſe was ſo vaſtly inferior to an earthquake in it's violence and effects, when they had ſufficient reaſon to find that diſcovery was hardly a true one. The door of the upper apartment clapped to with a violence that ſhook the whole fabrick; the ſtairs from their foundations ſhook beneath the rattling of hoſtile feet, that poured with ſcarce leſs rage or rapidity along them than the broken waves over the cataracts of the Nile; the door of the parlour in which they were aſſembled burſt open, and in the middle of the company, before it was poſſible to conceive any body had entered the room, appeared the horrifick front of Mrs. Singledoſe.

'What, you extravagant, ye-ye-ye-
'ye idle fool! becauſe I won't let you
'have tea for your goſſips, do you in-
'tend to keep 'em here all night to ruin
'me with fire and candle? Ye may be
'aſhamed of yourſelves, ye pitiful, beg-
'garly crew as ye are; becauſe you ſee a
'man is ſoft and fooliſh, to eat and
'drink him out of houſe and home in
'this manner! What good did any of
'em do you, I'd be glad to know, ye
'poor-ſpirited fool, that you dare not
'tell 'em of it? I know well enough
'you make all their books and their
'nonſenſe for 'em; and they would ne-
'ver get a halfpenny, if it were not for
'your brains: but what did they ever do
'for you, I aſk you that? Did any of 'em
'ever take a ſingle doſe of your phyſick?
'or, if they did, I'll be hang'd if they
'ever paid for it. Go your ways, for
'a great Eſſex calf, as you always call
'yourſelf; you don't call yourſelf out
'of your name when you ſay ſo, take
'my word for it.'

She was proceeding in this torrent of eloquence; but a ſlap on the forehead, which ſhe had given the peaceful doctor at the end of the laſt ſentence (whether it were meant as a chaſtiſement, or as a piece of contemptuous dalliance, we will not preſume to ſay) felled him as ſuddenly, as ever did the blow of a butcher's axe a more full grown creature of the ſame ſpecies, to the ground. On this, the torrent of her revilings turned ſolely on the company. 'Now,' exclaims ſhe, 'ye pitiful fellows, what will you all of
'you do for me and my children, if my
'poor huſband is got killed among you?
'An honeſt pains-taking man as any in
'the pariſh, if it were not for ſuch ver-
'min as you are eating him up.'

The company were obliged to interfere at this period, to tell the lady that the violence of her action had thrown a Japan ſkreen into the fire, which it was impoſſible for them to get out of the flames till ſhe moved. The poor doctor, who, from the conſolation of the relenting temper his wife expreſſed in the laſt ſentence, had taken hope of reconciling all again, opened his eyes: but the word Japan was no ſooner pronounced, whether any ſuch word had any connection with the title of the book the doctor was to have publiſhed, or by whatever other combination of ideas it brought the book into the heroine's mind, I know not; but ſhe inſtantly flew out upon the name. The honeſty of her reviving huſband vaniſhed before it: and—'Aye,' ſays ſhe,
'Japan, indeed! I'll japan ye, you
'ſcurvy fellow! I don't ſuppoſe there's
'one of theſe gentlemen here but what
'you have promiſed the book to, though
'you know well enough you never de-
'ſigned to publiſh it. Aye, aye, if you
'uſe your friends that ſupport you, and
'recommend you, and put bread into
'your mouth, in this manner, I don't
'wonder your poor wife and children
'are treated no better by you!'

Matters were now growing to a more terrible height than ever, the heroine having ſeized upon the looſe leg of a chair to execute vengeance on the proſtrate doctor: but Mr. Spence interpoſed; and the whole company pleading in favour of the vanquiſhed, and promiſing not to give her provocation again by repeating their viſits, ſhe at once laid down her weapon and her anger; and,

as

as they walked out of the door, led the peaceful doctor up ſtairs under her arm with great conjugal affection.

There are very few incidents, be they as diſagreeable as they will to the parties more immediately concerned, that are not attended with favourable conſequences to ſomebody. The hero of our ſtory, who was at this time quite unprepared to ſpeak of his dried whiting, found this an excellent excuſe for his not ſo much as producing it. The doctor, unwilling to loſe the information his viſitor came, as he imagined, fraught with, whiſpered him, juſt before they parted, that it would be a very acceptable thing to the whole body, if he would produce his ſpecimen, and his obſervations on it, at their next full meeting, which was to be two days after. He parted with a promiſe of doing ſo; and by this means obtained that period of time for the farther improvement in his ſtudies. As we ſhall not chuſe to diſturb him at them, we ſhall make that blank in our hiſtory a ſeparation of this part of it into two books, though the ſtory be continued.

END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

THE

ADVENTURES

OF

MR. GEORGE EDWARDS,

A CREOLE.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

IN WHICH HE DOES NOT GET A BIT NEARER HIS MISTRESS THAN WHERE WE JUST NOW LEFT HIM.

CHAP. I.

A MEETING OF A PHILOSOPHICK BODY, AND THE ENTERTAINMENT AFFORDED BY THE MEMBERS.

THE auguſt body was aſſembled: the clock had ſtruck five; the mace was laid upon the table, and the officers were ſeated in their reſpective places, when our hero was introduced to the community, as a perſon who had a curioſity to lay before them, and who would accompany his ſhewing the ſpecimen with ſome reaſonings upon it.

His terrors made him requeſt, that his ſhare of the entertainment might be the laſt produced; and, as this was readily complied with, he had leiſure to compoſe his ſpirits before he was called upon, at the ſame time that he was let into the importance and reaſonableneſs of the diſquiſitions he was admitted to, by the following particulars, which were ſerved up in order.

A Melon was firſt ſhewn, remarkable for it's ſize, it's weight being no leſs than ſixty-two pounds, and it's ſurface, notwithſtanding this, wholly like that of other melons. Every member crouded, to have it to ſay afterwards, that he had touched ſo immenſe a curioſity; and the gardener who had brought it, after it had paſſed the critical examination of all preſent, was diſmiſſed with the thanks of the body and a reward, and not without the private admonitions of the doorkeeper to have a picture of it drawn by the ingenious Mr. Hogarth, and to ſhew it, as people do the Panopticon and Coloſſus, approved by the Royal Society.

A very grave and learned member of the body next produced an account of a lady, who having laid her hand, in the dark, upon ſomething which ſhe took to be a rat, marked the child, with which ſhe was then big, with a robin-red-breaſt.

It appeared, indeed, the next morning, that it was a robin that the lady had touched; and we are informed, two of the gentlemen who were preſent, are at this time about to engage in a literary diſpute, which will probably be extended to ſome volumes, whether it ought to have

have been the thing really touched, or the thing ſuppoſed to have been touched, that the child ſhould have borne the impreſſion of? In theſe curious diſquiſitions, we are told the ſeat of the ſoul, the means of the communication of it with the body, and the effects of imagination in wounding, tearing, and annihilating corporeal objects, will be very fully treated of.

The third article conſiſted of a letter from a learned German; who, finding that the literati of England were at this time petrifaction-mad; and having heard that they had already met with petrified hams, petrified legs of veal, petrified eggs, and petrified ſturgeon; and thinking that nothing was wanting but the proper means of dreſſing theſe ſeveral bodies, in order to afford a truly philoſophick entertainment; ſent them word, that he had ſent over, by the good ſhip Hector, ſome *petrified flames of fire*. He added, that he had been obliged to pay a conſiderable inſurance againſt their burning out the bottom of the box in which they were ſent, and by that means firing the ſhip; which, as well as the charge of a perſon employed to watch them, to prevent ſuch accidents, he doubted not the body would repay with pleaſure, in conſideration of ſo curious and unheard of a foſſil. The name of this curious commentator was John George Frederick William Charles Ernſt Auguſtus Bruckman. This had been confuſedly read among the *doctiſſimus's* and *celeberrimus's*, with which it ſtood intermingled at the top of the letter; but the name of the place of his reſidence, which was Wolfenbottle, ſtanding at the bottom, where we uſually put our names, with the word *ſcribebam* before it; the very accurate and intelligent Doctor Singledoſe read it in ſuch a manner, that the thanks of the body were directed to be returned to the very learned and ingenious Doctor Scribonius Wolfenbottle, for this curious and valuable preſent, whenever it ſhould be received.

After this, was produced an account of a Petropolitan nobleman, whom nature had intended for a man of weight; but who not chuſing to be encumbered with more body than his favourite hunter could conveniently carry, had inciſions annually made in his arms, legs, back, ſides, and belly, and the fat carefully ſcooped out from every part of his body.

The laſt diſh, furniſhed independently of our hero, was a letter from a young lady on her travels, giving an account of the buried city of Herculaneum: this laughed at all the former pompous ſtories from the ſame place, and deſtroyed the credit of the pictures ſo much boaſted of; but, in return, it mentioned ſeveral particulars of the utmoſt conſequence; ſuch as Bruſſels lace of an exquiſite pattern, made of the aſbeſtus ſtone, and therefore unhurt by the fire and brimſtone; a leg of mutton, that had evidently been raw when the deſtruction happened, but was compleatly well dreſſed by the ſubterranean fires; and, leſt bread ſhould be wanting to eat with it, a petrified quartern-loaf, with the baker's name upon it.

It appeared afterwards, that the firſt of the curious ſubjects produced this evening before this learned body, was a pumpkin, which the artful gardener had ſcratched the coat of while young; that, as to the ſecond, it was not a bird called a robin-red-breaſt, but the ſhoulder of one Robin, a ſervant in the family, that the lady had leaned upon; that the main buſineſs of the learned German was to get an Engliſh watch, which, on his having given ſome ſlight hint that it would be agreeable to him, was ſent by the firſt ſhip; and that, when his petrified flames of fire arrived, they were no more than two toad ſtools that had grown in an old chimney; and that the two laſt articles were no other than banters from a very ſevere ſatiriſt, who had before laughed at the body for it's credulity, and who had ventured wagers among his companions that they were not yet cured, but that theſe accounts would be well received among them. Our hero's communication came next in order; but that being by no means of a piece with theſe ideal diſcoveries, we ſhall reſerve it for the ſubject of another chapter.

CHAP. II.

AN ICHTHYOLOGICAL DISSERTATION UPON A DRIED WHITING.

THE ſubjects mentioned in the former chapter, accounts of every one of which may be found in the minutes of the body whoſe diſcoveries we are celebrating, and the relations of

which, at large, we flatter ourſelves will hereafter appear in their publications, having been diſcuſſed in this ample and entertaining manner; Mr. George Edwards was handed up to the table in form. He there produced the curioſity every body was ſo big with the expectation of ſeeing; and with it delivered a paper to one of the ſecretaries, who read it aloud in the following words—

" The animal, which I have the honour to lay before this learned and " ingenious body, is a fiſh.

" Man has been defined to be, *animal* " *bipes et implume*, an animal with two " feet, and without feathers. A fiſh, " on the contrary, is ſaid to be, *animal* " *apodum pinnis præditum*, an animal " without any feet at all, and furniſhed " with fins. Such is the received definition of this claſs of animals; but, " to me, this appears ſhorter than it " ought to be; and, with the permiſſion " of this honourable body, I would take " the liberty of perfecting it in the following manner—

" *Piſcis eſt animal apodum, pinnis* " *ſemper præditum; vel branchiis vel* " *pulmonibus reſpirans, plerumque in* " *aqua habitans, ibique vel ſolis pinnis* " *vel flexuoſo corporis impulſu ſimul na-* " *tans, interdum vero in terram ſponte* " *egrediens, et quandoque in aere ſupra* " *aquam ope pinnarum pectoralium vo-* " *lans.* Whoever will be pleaſed to " conſider the treatiſe of a very learned " author, *De Piſcibus in ſicco viventi-* " *bus*, and at the ſame time will obſerve, that this definition of mine excludes crabs, lobſters, and prawns, " together with all kinds of ſhell-fiſh, " while it comprehends eels, whales, " ſea-cows, and flying-fiſh, will, I preſume, allow me the juſtice of it.

" Having thus eſtabliſhed the characters of fiſh in general, we are to " conſider them as divided by nature " into five claſſes. Theſe I ſhall beg " leave to expreſs by terms borrowed " from the Greek, calling them *Ma-* " *lacopterygii, Acanthopterygii, Bran-* " *chioſtegi, Chondropterygii*, and *Pla-* " *giuri*; expreſſing the different nature " of their fins, the ſtructure of the parts " about their gills, and the horizontal " or perpendicular ſituation of their " tails.

" It will appear, gentlemen, that the " ſubject before us is one of the firſt " claſs of fiſhes, the *Malacopterygii*, " which are diſtinguiſhed from all the " others, by their having the rays of " their fins bony, but not pungent, *qua-* " *rum radii oſſei quidem ſunt, ſed nullo* " *modo pungentes.*

" The head, gentlemen, you will be " pleaſed to obſerve, is depreſſed, and " it has ſeven bones in the membrane, " covering the gills; it will therefore " appear very plainly to you, that it is a " *gadus*, the general characters of that " genus being, that the head is either " *cathetoplateous*, or *plagioplateous*; that " the *branchioſtege membrane* has ſeven " bones of a cylindrick figure in it, and " that there are either two or three fins " on the back.

" From it's genus, I ſhall beg leave " to deſcend to it's ſpecifick names. " Bellonius has called it, *merlangus*, a " name which evidently confounds it " with another fiſh. Mr. Ray, *aſellus*, " a denomination which puts one in " mind of a *wood-louſe*. Aldrovand " calls it, *aſellus minor*; and Rondeletius, *ſecunda aſellorum ſpecies*; which " names alſo, in my opinion, convey no " better idea than that of a *little wood-* " *louſe*; or, *a wood-louſe different from* " *ſome one that the author had deſcribed* " *before.* If I may take the liberty of " giving it a name that may live in your " collections, I ſhall call it, *Gadus* " *dorſo tripterygio, ore imberbi, corpore* " *albo, maxilla ſuperiore longiore.* The " Danes, I find, call it *koller*; the Germans, *ein moll*; and the Swedes, *il-* " *wiſtling.*

" From it's names, I ſhall take the " liberty of proceeding to point out the " moſt ſingular and remarkable circumſtances of it's form. It's head, gentlemen, you may perceive, is of an " irregular figure; it's back is convex, " and it's a—e is remarkably near it's " head. It's colour is white, except on " the back, where it is grey; and the " ſcales are very ſmall and round: it's " noſtrils are large, and ſtand in the " midway between the eyes and the extremity of the ſnout.

" It has ſeveral rows of teeth in the " upper jaw, but only one row in the " lower, and the teeth in this are unequal: in the anterior part of the palate it has a bony ſubſtance, covered " with teeth, and forming the two ſides " of a triangle; and it has alſo two " roundiſh and two oblong bones in the " *fauces*, beſet with teeth in the ſame

" manner,

" manner. What an amazing apparatus " for tearing, grinding, and lacerating " it's food!

" It's *linea lateralis*, gentlemen, you " may diſtinguiſh, is of a blackiſh co- " lour, and crooked; and there is a " black ſpot near the root of each of the " pectoral fins.

" Thoſe fins themſelves have twenty- " one rays in each, and the middle one " is longeſt and bifurcated: the ventral " fins are placed more anteriorly than " the pectoral ones; they have ſix ribs " in each, and the ſecond is the longeſt " of theſe.

" Of the three fins on the back, the " firſt is triangular, and has twenty-one " rays in each; there are two *pinnæ ani* " —I beg leave to put it in Latin, gen- " tlemen, to ſave a coarſe word, which " I have been obliged to uſe once alrea- " dy—and, finally, the *vertebræ* are in " number forty and four.

" The *viſcera* I had preſerved, gen- " tlemen, in a bottle of rum, for your " inſpection; but unfortunately, a de- " bauched ſailor, in the voyage, drank " up all the ſpirit, and afterwards " threw away the bottle, to prevent " diſcovery. According to the notes " which I took upon the ſpot, however, " I find that the liver was white, and " divided into two lobes; the ſpleen was " triangular, and ſituated under the " ſtomach; the ovaries, for it was a fe- " male, were oblong, and full of yel- " low ova; the air-bladder was oblong, " ſimple, glutinous, and affixed to the " ſpine; the pneumatick duct, by which " the air is carried to this veſicle, had " it's inſertion in the upper part of it, " and it's origination in the œſopha- " gus. The heart was obtuſely qua- " drilateral; and the ſtomach oblong, " thick, reflex in it's lower part, and " coronated with a number of cæca " about the pylorus."

A perfect ſilence had been obſerved during the reading of this truly curious paper. At the end of it, the youth received the general applauſe of the body: he was immediately propoſed for a member; and, what was much more to his purpoſe, had the honour of the particular thanks of the father of his miſtreſs, and was invited to his houſe.

The addreſs with which the young author had concealed the Engliſh name of his fiſh, while he told the Daniſh, German, and Swediſh, as well as the learned ones, left his audience no ſuſpicion of it's being a whiting; and their utter unacquaintance with the authors who treat on theſe ſubjects, gave them no idea that one Petrus Artedus had talked much to the ſame purpoſe. They broke up as thoroughly ſatisfied with this laſt part of their entertainment as with any of the former; they gave orders for the paper to be printed; and begged the proprietor of the curious ſpecimen to let their engraver wait upon him, to take a drawing of it, that a copper-plate figure might be exhibited of ſo curious a fiſh in their works.

CHAP. III.

THE CONVERSATION AT DR. SINGLEDOSE'S RENEWED. CHARACTER AND HISTORY OF MR. STORM.

THE company began, after this, to file off by degrees: but Dr. Singledoſe, who was now out of office for the night, made up to as many of his late company as were preſent, which was very nearly all of them; and with great earneſtneſs kept them together to hear his apology. The good doctor was entering on a ſtudied harangue, in which he would have treated largely of the Xantippes of the ſeveral ages, of the government of huſbands, and of the virtues of patience and reſignation; but he was cut ſhort in it by the Anabaptiſt, who aſſerted, that whatever might be the ſource of the doctor's domeſtic broils, this late one had been an evident judgment on them, for liſtening to the obſcene diſcourſe of that deluder of virgins, Mr. Farthing. ' Deluder of a ' fiddleſtick's end!' replied the antiquarian; ' I was not talking of the things ' thou thinkeſt about. I muſt inform ' thee, that there are a ſpecies of coins ' called Traders, a kind of halfpence, ' that were in uſe an age or two ago, ' and which every tradeſman had per- ' miſſion to coin for himſelf, to be of ' uſe in change, only marking them ' with his name, and that of the place ' he lived in, as a promiſe to take them ' again as money on demand. I have, ' with long application, you are to ' know, collected Traders of all the ' principal places in Berkſhire; but, till ' a week ago, I never had one of the ' town of Maidenhead, in that county,

'when I purchaſed this, as I told you, 'at that time.' So ſaying, he produced, to the great admiration and improvement of all preſent, the coin purchaſed of the cinder-girl before-mentioned.

The preacher was abaſhed; the company enjoyed the jeſt in ſilence, except Mr. Storm, who, after very deliberately ſcratching his head, and then drawing his fingers through his lank locks, in form of a four-toothed comb, declared, he never knew a perſon whoſe zeal did not, at one time or other in his life, make a fool of him. Mr. Storm thought he had ſaid enough for one evening, and not being of a diſpoſition to throw away any thing, he retired without ceremony, to make himſelf a reputation, by his next good ſpeech, in ſome new company.

The preacher looked a little fooliſh after the defeat; but the Atheiſt immediately gave him his revenge of the victor, by relating to the company the following hiſtory of his hate to the clergy.

'Mr. Storm, you are to know,' ſays he, 'is a man of a moderate fortune in 'the country; he has inherited from nature an excellent conſtitution, and a 'very uncommon ſhare of underſtanding; but ſome cruel Phyllis, in his 'younger days, jilted him out of the 'love of the whole ſex, and indeed of 'the whole world: he retired immediately on this from London to his eſtate, where he devoted himſelf to 'reading, and calculated his whole income and his expences in ſuch a manner, as not to ſave a farthing a year, 'nor to run as much behind hand.

'He had lived in this manner half a 'year, when the parſon of the pariſh 'made him a viſit, to aſk for his tythes: 'he was ſtruck dumb with the unexpected demand; he found it larger 'than he could have imagined, even 'after he had recollected that it muſt be 'a due. He offered a compromiſe with 'the churchman, but it was refuſed; 'a law-ſuit was commenced; and, 'after various hearings, it was given 'wholly in favour of the rector.

'Mr. Storm could not but ſubmit to 'the ſentence, but he would by no means 'acquieſce in it: he declared open war 'againſt the parſon, and the whole 'church that he belonged to; and ſet 'up, in mere revenge, a new religion 'of his own.

'Every tree in the pariſh, on the next 'Saturday, had a written invitation 'ſtuck upon it, to every inhabitant to 'come to the New Chapel, commonly 'called the Hall-houſe, and hear a ſermon preached by Mr. Storm. The 'novelty carried two-thirds of the pariſh to him, and the clergyman felt the 'preference given to his antagoniſt very 'ſeverely. The bills of invitation were 'ſtuck up again for the next Sunday; 'but whether it was that the charm of 'novelty was now wanting, whether 'the former diſcourſe had not pleaſed 'them, or whether the antagoniſt had 'uſed any unfair method with his pariſhioners, had thundered in their 'trembling ears damnation, or whatever might be the cauſe, too ſure it is, 'that the new preacher had not a ſingle 'hearer.

'The triumphs of the prieſt, on this, 'were too great to be borne: the new 'preacher determined on finding ſome 'expedient to call back his flock, 'which had deſerted him; and at length 'hit on the very lucky one of adding 'to his next bills, that whoever came to 'Mr. Storm's chapel for the future, 'were deſired to ſtay and dine there on 'beef and pudding. The ſtratagem 'did not fail of ſucceſs, whom not the 'word of the Lord could get together; 'the loaves and the fiſhes ſummoned with 'irreſiſtible power; the very third ſhare 'of the company that had fallen to the 'church in the former diviſion, now 'forſook it; every man, woman, and 'child, went regularly to Mr. Storm's 'chapel; and he had the triumph to 'know, that his antagoniſt was preaching all the while to the pews and 'benches.

'This perfect victory on Mr. Storm's 'ſide continued ſix months, and would 'undoubtedly have laſted till this time, 'had not the new preacher now flattered himſelf that he had thoroughly 'converted the hearts and ſouls of his 'hearers to his perſuaſion; and ventured 'to try whether he could not bring them 'together by the mere force of his doctrine, without the allurement of a dinner. He told them from the pulpit 'his reſolution of continuing to feed 'their ſouls with his admonitions; but 'that, as to bodily food, they muſt get 'it as they uſed to do. On the next 'Sunday, he mounted the roſtrum as 'uſual, at the appointed hour; but, 'alas! there had been a week to conſider

'upon

'upon it, and the consequence of this 'was an universal resolution in favour 'of the old religion; the chapel was as 'empty as the church had of late been, 'and the parson triumphed in his turn 'over his thoroughly routed antagonist. 'From this time matters have gone on 'there in their old channel again; the 'boards that made the seats now serve to 'contain the squire's hogs; the tressels on 'which they were laid, have found 'their way under the washing-tubs and 'beer-barrels again; the pulpit is re-con-'verted into it's original state of a writ-'ing-desk; and the hall serves, instead 'of blasphemy and nonsense, to hear, 'after dinner, every day of the villainy 'of parsons, and the miseries of a na-'tion that is church-ridden.'

CHAP. IV.

AN ODD INTRODUCTION OF A VERY SINGULAR CHARACTER.

THE contempt in which our hero held the father of his mistress, the whole philosophick body under his direction, and even philosophy itself, could be equalled by nothing but the adoration in which that body held him. A motive very different from philosophy had, however, carried him among them; that motive subsisted; and he did not find the charms of the daughter at all impaired by what he now saw of the father. He determined to make the utmost of his present success, before a discovery (which indeed he had no reason in the world to dread) should rob him of his merit; and had resolved on visiting in the family the next morning.

On his arrival at home from this meeting of the Philosophick Body, he found on his table the following laconick message, written on a very curious French card—

'MRS. Spadille has a polite rout 'to-night; if you'll come, you'll 'meet with somebody that will be very 'glad to see you. You are known, and 'will need no formal introduction.'

It was now but about eight; Mrs. Spadille's was easily found; and our hero, though he was in no great humour for any engagement, rather than refuse an absolute challenge, walked in. He found about twenty ladies, and half as many men there: they were just sat down to tea, and he took his place among them. Every body was complaisant to him, particularly as they saw him a stranger; he joined in the conversation on common topicks, and had at length got into a private party of four, who were talking over the newest scandal of the town: he found himself in very agreeable company, but he could not discern in any body's face any peculiar business with him.

He was ruminating on the meaning of this whimsical adventure, when a very agreeable voice was heard, displaying all it's excellences under the advantage of one of Palma's newest songs, as the lady to whom it belonged was tripping up stairs. The door, in an instant, was thrown open with a jaunty violence; and the lady who had been heard was now seen tripping with a consummately agreeable negligence into the room.

Mrs. Spadille was, at this time, making the tea at such a distance from the door, that nothing less than a fling, that almost shook it from the hinges, could have forced it to her: the extremity of the lock, however, at this instant, just reached the edge of the table that was before her, and tipped it over. In an instant, a scene of confusion arose, scarce to be described by words; the whole equipage was scattered over different parts of the floor; the saucers split; the cups, as many of them as were whole, were seen rolling about; the tea, half mingled with the cream, formed a party-coloured deluge in one part of the floor; along another ran the water sending up it's curling clouds of smoke; and between them a stream of liquid fire from the lamp, spreading like one of the rivers of the infernal regions, and sending up a blue flame all the way that it ran: in one place you might see a beau aiming a whiffling puff at the flame, to extinguish it; in another, a lady treading it out, and setting fire to the fringe of her under-petticoat; and in a third, an unlucky fellow, who had been too near the fall of the boiling cataract, making faces, and examining his scalded shins: but infinitely the greatest sight of horror was afforded by Mrs. Spadille herself, who being dressed in a chintz sacque, had first received the flaming ruins of the lamp on her lap, whence she had not

not thrown it time enough to prevent it's ſetting her on fire. She was now blazing to the very ſhoulders; and a gentleman, who before ſat next our hero, was employed in extinguiſhing the fire, by covering it with his unbuttoned waiſtcoat.

The lady who had occaſioned all the miſchief walked very deliberately up to the vacant ſeat at our hero's elbow, threw herſelf into it, and, lolling back with her arms acroſs, entertained herſelf with whiſtling the *Black Joke*. Mr. Edwards could not but exclaim to her—'Good 'Heaven, Madam, how unconcerned 'you ſit all this while!'—'Aye,' replied ſhe, raiſing her elbows, half ſtretching herſelf, and gaping as ſhe ſpoke—

'Like Helen in the night, when Troy was
'ſack'd,
'Spectatreſs of the miſchief ſhe had made.'

Our hero's admiration was ſcarce at it's height on this romantick occaſion, when the lady, with an utter unconcern as to every thing about her, turned the fineſt pair of eyes in the world directly upon him, and ſaid, with a ſmile of affected indifference—'I fancy you was begin-'ning to wonder, by this time, how you 'came here.'—'I am very glad,' replied he eagerly, 'to find any body that 'is able to inform me.'—'Huſh!' ſays the lady, with a look of infinite ſagacity, 'I have done all that miſchief, to 'give the people ſomething elſe to do 'than to obſerve us: I take you to be 'a gay frolick, jovial fellow, and I have 'a mind to be acquainted with you.' The lady having explained herſelf thus far, was at leiſure to make her apologies to the company. She walked up firſt to Mrs. Spadille, begged her pardon for the miſchief ſhe had occaſioned, and inſiſted on her permiſſion to replace every thing ſhe had deſtroyed; then comprehending the company in one circular curtſey, ſhe begged pardon of them all for the confuſion her ſtrange inadvertence had thrown them into; and returning to her place, under pretence of a particular excuſe to Mr. Edwards, to whom her back had been turned during the general humiliation, ſhe bid him play two rubbers at whiſt, and then come home and ſup with her.

Our hero was too heartily in love with his new flame, Miſs Sedate, to have eaſily fallen into a ſecond affair of the ſame kind; but there was ſomething ſo irreſiſtibly commanding in the manner of this lady, that he found it impoſſible not to obey, nay, not to obey with rapture. Prudence alſo dictated one conſideration to him on this occaſion, which, though it may not plead very greatly in his favour with the ladies, certainly will be allowed it's weight with the people of reaſon of the other ſex, or even of that ſex, after a certain intereſted age. He looked upon his late engagement as one that would be attended with almoſt infinite difficulties, and which, though he could be ſucceſsful againſt them all, yet muſt neceſſarily take a great deal of time to bring to a happy concluſion. In the mean time there was a *ready Indiana*, (take care, gentle reader, that there is not more juſtice in this expreſſion than thou art at preſent aware of) who would ſoothe the pangs of delay, and of his impatience on the other's part; and whom it would be eaſy for him, at any time, from ſome ſuch attack upon another, as ſhe had now made upon himſelf, to take occaſion to quarrel with, and be rid of, without any blame on his own part.

If people always knew the rank in which they ſtood in one another's thoughts, it would prevent a vaſt deal of that miſchief that happens from their being too well acquainted, and thinking too favourably of one another. Could this woman of pleaſure and experience have imagined it poſſible that ſhe was intended to be the tool, the dupe of a raw Weſt-Indian boy, the wanton for his leiſure, to toy and waſte an hour of idle time with, without poſſeſſing any the leaſt ſhare of his heart, or even of his good opinion, in what extreme contempt would ſhe have held herſelf, him, and all the world! This was a ſecret that dwelt, however, in his breaſt alone, and indeed was not of quite that duration there, that his fixed ſentiments on the ſubject, at this time, ſeemed to preſage.

The appointed period arrived; the games were over, and the lady took her leave with little ceremony. The lover was out of the party, and waited on her to her chair: ſhe ſlipped a pocket-book into his hand, in the firſt leaf of which was her direction; and bidding him not to follow her ſo immediately as to give ſuſpicion, ſunk into her chair, and bade the ſlaves go home. Mr. Edwards returned

turned to the party, eager to know something of his new acquaintance; but the utmost he could learn from the terms *mad creature, strange devil of a woman*, and the like, that passed among the company, was, that there was nothing new in her behaviour that evening, but that he should find her just the same gay, galloping mistress, to the end of the chapter.

That she was not a common strumpet was evident, from the company he met her in: that she was not under the protection of any particular person, was as evident, from her engaging him to sup at her lodgings; and yet, that there could be any difficulty in sleeping there, seemed as absurd to imagine, from her whole deportment, and from the nature of their acquaintance. That they met in half an hour, is certain; and that their meeting was not without it's consequences, is as sure; but, eager as the reader is to know what they were, he must have patience to the next chapter.

CHAP. V.

A VISIT FROM MR. EDWARDS TO MISS ODDLY, FROM WHICH THE READER WILL FORM SOME ODD PRESAGES.

TEN thousand strange conjectures did Mr. Edwards frame in his mind as he went to the appointed rendezvous; and as many questions of the utmost importance did he, from moment to moment, put to himself, without being able to answer any one of them. He was in the utmost uncertainty, whether she had a house or a lodging; whether he should be received in a parlour or a dining-room; and whether the bed was linen or damask; but, to do him justice, whether he should be happy in it, or not, was not one of them. In short, reader, if thou hast ever known the delight of being danced along in a chair to the apartments of a fine woman, who was almost a stranger to thee, but with whom thou wert very well assured thou wert in an hour or two to be better acquainted; thou mayest have some idea of what was Mr. Edwards's situation, as he was carried down St. James's Street, across the Park, and up to the back-door of a very handsome house, the front of which was in Duke Street. I have the charity also to hope, that, if thou hast felt all these expectations upon as good an occasion, thou hast succeeded as well in the event as our hero did.

Mr. Edwards was no sooner out of his chair, than he was received at the bottom of a terrace by a footman with a white flambeau, who lighted him across the garden, and shewed him the way into a hall, in which there stood four more fellows in the same laced uniforms, one of whom preceded him with a couple of wax-candles up a painted stair-case, and threw open the door of a dining-room, the furniture of which was worth about a thousand pounds.

Our lover's ideas had indeed been gradually enough raised to the pitch they were now at; but, notwithstanding, the full torrent of his surprize was now too much for him to bear: he hesitated a moment at the door, and after muttering something to himself, that sounded like—'Miss Sedate, you may go to the 'devil if you please,' he entered the chamber of joy.

I know not how it is that the ideas of magnificence are connected with those of love, but unquestionably they are so. The woman, that we would bestow a smile of approbation on in a lutestring night-gown, we look up with reverence to in embroidery; and her, whom we held in the rank of a pretty girl while in quality of Miss Somebody, we adore as a divinity, as soon as we are informed that the terms Right Honourable are tacked to her name.

Mr. Edwards, from the nature of his acquaintance with this lady, could never have any idea of Wife enter into his heart; and his circumstances were too affluent to bear the slightest thought of his being profited by her fortune; yet, so it was, that every idea he had formed of her charms, and of the pleasure he should have in her acquaintance, rose in proportion to those he now entertained of her condition; and though, but half an hour before, the turn of a straw might have determined his accepting or not accepting her invitation, a thousand cart-horses would now scarce have been able to drag him away from her.

After so much said of the heart and situation of the hero of the present scene, it may be time to come to the mention of the heroine of it. Miss Oddly, for such was the lady's name, was the only

daughter of a man of immenſe fortune, who had died while ſhe was an infant; and ſhe was now juſt arrived at the age in which the will of her father, and the laws of her country, had thought her of diſcretion enough to be truſted with the management of that, and that of herſelf, without a guardian. She was a tall, well-proportioned, and extremely genteel woman, but not handſome; her features were tolerably regular, and her complexion, though dark, not yellow; her eyes were, indeed, the fineſt the world ever ſaw, and her teeth far from bad ones; yet, ſome way, there was an unluckineſs in the putting her face together, that prevented a poſſibility of any body's thinking her a beauty. There are many faces allowed to be very fine ones all together, which yet don ot bear taking to pieces; on the contrary, Miſs Oddly's was of a kind, that never ſhewed ſo much merit as when examined by parts; and conſequently ſhe was one of thoſe few women who appear much handſomer on a nearer and repeated examination. Whether it was owing to this circumſtance in nature, or to the change of Mr. Edwards's thoughts, from the grandeur of the ſcene, we ſhall not preſume to ſay; but thus much muſt be acknowledged, that he thought her vaſtly more like an angel now than he had done an hour before.

She roſe from a velvet ſopha, at the upper end of the room, to receive him; ran to the very door with vaſt alacrity and chearfulneſs to meet him; ſeized his hand between both her's, with perfect familiarity; and, ſqueezing it very tenderly, told him, ſhe was extremely glad to ſee him: 'You think me a ſtrange 'wild creature, I know, Mr. Edwards,' ſays ſhe, 'in all this, but you won't 'like me the leſs for it when you have 'known me longer.' Our hero was raiſing his lips, to make the moſt feeling return for ſo free and good-natured a reception; but he ſtuck, as it were, halfway, on diſcovering, at this inſtant, a gay genteel young fellow, whom the lady had left on the corner of the ſopha ſhe had riſen from. The lady ſaw his confuſion, ſhe toſſed up her head with an engaging indolence, and ſaid, with the moſt conſummate indifference—'O! 'don't put yourſelf under any conſtraint 'in regard to him; that gentleman, you 'are to know, Sir, would fain do me 'the great honour of becoming my huſ-'band.' She then introduced them to one another in form; begged them, for her ſake, to become acquainted, and, throwing herſelf into the middle of the ſopha, pointed to the two corners, as at their ſervice.

A vaſt deal of unreſtrained converſation, and, to do it more than juſtice, of real genuine wit, paſſed in conſequence of this, before, at, and after ſupper. The clock ſtruck two, and three, unregarded; toward four, the gentlemen began to find out, that they had mutually reſolved to ſit out one another: the lady, however, at the next ſignal of the clock, put a period to the conteſt, by telling them it was high time they ſhould make an end of their viſit.

CHAP. VI.

MR. EDWARDS AND HIS NEW ACQUAINTANCE COME TOWARDS AN EXPLANATION.

IF our hero had been ſomewhat ſmitten with the gaiety and freedom of this lady, and half in love with her perſon, at his firſt interview, in which he had conceived very different ideas from his preſent ones, about her circumſtances and ſituation, he was now perfectly fixed to her; and he gave way, in very prudence, to his fondneſs, as, he flattered himſelf, he ſaw it would not be a great while that he ſhould be doomed to languiſh in expectation.

The company of a third perſon, and that a profeſſed rival, could not have been very agreeable to him on any conditions; but leaſt of all ſo, under the circumſtances in which he fancied this lady and he had met: he made no doubt of her being as ready as himſelf for every extravagance of love and folly; and he determined on the next afternoon as the utmoſt period of their mutual expectation.

He viſited her ſo early after dinner, that he knew ſhe could have no other company. She received him with all the joy and familiarity of the night before; and he, who thought he read every good-natured intention that he could wiſh in her eyes, ventured, pretty early in the afternoon, to grumble a little about the impertinent ſtaying of the laſt night's viſitor; and to intreat ſhe would prevent a poſſibility of ſo vexatious an accident

a ſecond

a second time, by giving orders to her servants to say she was not at home, whoever came.

The lady answered, with a stare, accompanied with a *naivetté* of aspect (for there is no English word that can express such an innocent ignorance of face) which puzzled our hero's apprehension to know what to make of it. After a silence of some moments, in which, indeed, it was the lover's business, if he had known his business, to have spoken, he said with a look of contemptuous astonishment—'Why, my 'dear, dear, little Lovy, what, in the 'name of wonder, can you and I have 'to talk of, that all the world may not 'hear! Upon my honour, I am not 'afraid of owning I like you; and I 'would fain suppose, you need not be 'ashamed of being in love with me.' —'Two people,' replied she, 'in my 'opinion, are the very worst party in the 'world; but come, sit down like a good 'boy, and we'll make the best we can 'of it, till somebody has compassion 'enough to come in, and cure us of be-'ing tired of one another.'

Mr. Edwards was thoroughly plagued and mortified at this cavalier speech: it was not his business, however, to quarrel; and he submitted to it. They passed the afternoon and the evening in great gaiety, alone: Fortune was favourable enough to them, to have provided for this, by keeping every body from the door; but the lover, as men never fail to put the best-natured construction possible on every thing that regards the woman they like, made no doubt but this was by her order, though she had pretended not to design it, and had so happily counterfeited a surprize on his asking her to do what she had done already.

Supper came up; and our hero, perfectly satisfied that he should not be turned out of doors that night again, and sufficiently determined not to go out on any other terms, made a merit of keeping the distance the lady obliged him to, and had ventured to say, in excuse for some good behaviour that he could not help, that great delicacies were to be fed on, not tasted; and that no man in his senses would wish to eat ortolans off a trencher.

About the middle of supper, when the lover's heart was in much that sort of state that a bridegroom is, who has married for love, when he is pulling his shoes off, a rap at the door proclaimed the approach of a visitor. 'Be denied, 'dear, dear creature, be denied;' exclaims our hero with great rapture. The lady very coolly told him, it was impossible: that her doors were always open to good company, and that no other ever came to them; and, giving him a gentle pat on the hand, asked him in a whisper, how he could be such a bear, to hint such a thing before the servants?

Whatever distress the former part of this speech had involved him in, the latter made him ample amends for: he construed it into an absolute declaration of her being willing to do every thing but expose herself, and was reconciling his thoughts to the incident, vexatious as it was, by assuring himself so late a visit could be but a short one; when the person entered the room, and proved to be no other than the honourable lover who had, as Mr. Edwards understood it, spoiled all the sport the night before.

His aspect would have spoken his discontent too plainly for the misunderstanding it, had not the lady addressed the gentleman who had just entered, with all her natural familiarity and vivacity—'You a lover indeed! 'never presume to tell me of it again; 'never to see me since this time last 'night! Why, here's this polite crea-'ture has been courting me these six 'hours; upon my life, I have not had 'a more agreeable *tête a tête* these seven 'years. You and I are generally insi-'pid after the first quarter of an hour; 'you must learn of him, if you ever 'think to charm me.—Do, my dear Ed-'wards, in pity to me, teach the horrid 'creature to be tolerable.'

Our hero, whose attention was all this while at the utmost pitch, now saw the whole affair in a new light; he concluded, by the time of this visit, by his finding the same person there at that hour the night before, though it was evident the lady had not been herself at home half an hour, and by the perfect unconcern she evidently gave herself, as to all her words and actions, before him; that the terms Husband and Honourable were mere cant, used to disguise a connection of another kind; that the sending him away the night before was pure grimace; and that, in short, he was an humble lover, supported by the lady, for the amusement of her softer hours.

Mr. Edwards had not disguise enough in his nature to cover either his suspicions or his uneasiness from them: he grew dull, the lady saw it; she rallied her other lover, for coming in so opportunely, to spoil the best company in the world; and made this an excuse for dissolving the party earlier than ordinary, but not without telling Mr. Edwards, that she insisted upon seeing him the very first moment that he was in a good humour again.

The lover retired to his bed, little doubting but that his rival slept in Miss Oddly's, and resolutely determined that he would do so the night afterwards. He visited her, as he had done before, and was disappointed, as he had been before; he repeated his visit, and his disappointment was repeated: he spent a fortnight in this dangling way, every day expecting the completion of his expectations, and every day perfectly satisfied, that accident, cursed accident alone, not any want of inclination on the lady's part, had prevented him.

In this persuasion, if any body could have read the sentiments of his heart about Miss Oddly, they would have declared her an infamous strumpet; and whoever had seen her reception of him, and of half a dozen more people who visited her, would have declared her mistress of every one of them. Few young fellows have the absence of vanity in such a degree, as to deny a suspicion of this kind, because it is false; most have disingenuity and villainy enough (for the last word expresses it better) to boast the conquest they find it impossible to make; and thus, in this great world of scandal, a thousand reputations are sacrificed through inadvertence and vanity, for one that is lost, because there has been real ill to occasion it.

CHAP. VII.

IN WHICH MR. EDWARDS AND MISS ODDLY ABSOLUTELY UNDERSTAND ONE ANOTHER.

MR. Edwards, convinced at length that it was impossible for him to do any thing either at the lady's house, or at his own, (for she had visited him with great freedom, and had always laughed at his attacks there, as much as in her own apartments) determined on a new plan: he attacked her at the last masquerade at Ranelagh, with his usual freedom and gaiety, but without any thing of that wild-fire, that too often, in their *tête a tête* parties, used to point out somewhat too plainly the magazine of mischief it was leading to. He found her in a very gay, and very good humour, full of ease, and wholly void of suspicion.

He had experience enough of the sex to know, that the first victory has all the difficulty; that after this, coyness and resistance are at an end; and, in consequence of this consideration, he came to a very prudent resolution of submitting to 'taste 'an ortolan on a trencher,' according to his own phrase, for the first time, that he might eat it off of plate or china as frequently as he pleased afterwards. He fixed on one of the tents in the garden for the scene of his rapture; and had nothing to give him a moment's uneasiness about the prosecution of his project, but his inexperience in our publick diversions, and an alarm raised by the sight of the centinels, who were posted at the doors of these places of recess.

He walked fifty times round and round one of these, that was pitched in an obscure part of the garden, and was extremely fit for his purpose, examining with great attention the face of the centinel: at length, determined to know the worst, rather than run any risk of a disappointment, he walked up to him, and telling him he did not like the appearance of armed men in a place of diversion, asked him what he was set there for? The fellow very readily answered, that he was posted there to prevent indecencies: the word might have deterred a man less bent upon the execution of his project than Mr. Edwards now was from farther enquiry; but he went on to tell him—'Sir, there is a lady in the 'room, that I have occasion to speak 'with in private; if we should come in- 'to this tent, you would not let any 'body else come in and interrupt us?'— 'No, to be sure, Sir,' replied the centinel; 'I hope I know my duty bet- 'ter.'

Happy in this certainty, the lover re-entered the room; he soon found his mistress; he complained of the smell of the provisions in the eating-rooms; and persuading the lady she was hungry, though she could not eat under such disadvantages, he ordered a couple of chairs into this

this tent; where there was already a table, and ſending ſome cray-fiſh, a cold chicken, and ſome wine, he rather led her in, than aſked if ſhe would go. Diſtruſt was not in the nature of Miſs Oddly, and fear was yet more a ſtranger to it. She was not without thoughts that this was a very wrong thing ſhe was doing, but ſhe would not give them leave to plead againſt the propoſal: it was a whim, and, as ſuch, it had irreſiſtible attraction for her.

The lover, on his part, had ſhut up the eyes and ears of the centinel with a guinea: the object of his deſires was alone, defenceleſs, and in his power, and he would not have given ſix-pence to aſſure him of the victory. He began with his uſual addreſſes, he proceeded to ſome bolder hints than he had ventured to give before, and, at length, he was uſing the eloquence of arms. The lady did not ſee, at firſt, what a ſituation ſhe had brought herſelf into; and, when ſhe did, ſhe was as far from ſeeing how ſhe ſhould get out of it. She very prudently conſidered, that reſiſtance could never ſave her: what was there left for her then but compliance? She hardly pretended to guard againſt his efforts, till they grew too violent for decency; but then ſhe drew back a ſtep or two, and, with perfect compoſure and great good-nature in her countenance, told him—'My very 'reſolute lover, I don't know that I ever 'told you it ſhould come to this; but if 'I had, I do aſſure you,' juſt now it is 'impoſſible.'

There is not a man in the world that would not rather have his miſtreſs with her inclination, than againſt it. Our youth underſtood the refuſal as the lady intended he ſhould; and aſſured himſelf that the difficulties were now all over, and that he might enter the town at diſcretion: he gave up the preſent evening at her demand, and they finiſhed their ſupper with great harmony. The gaiety of ſpirit the conſent of his miſtreſs had given Mr. Edwards, made him more brilliant, more agreeable, than uſual, during the remainder of the night; every body envied the lady her lover, as much as they did him his miſtreſs; and, about five, he handed her to her chair, and, to prevent ſuſpicion of their future meetings, at her earneſt requeſt, returned to the company.

CHAP. VIII.

TWO LOVE-LETTERS IN A NEW STYLE.

THE utmoſt ſtretch of our lover's genius was employed the next morning, to inform the lady in a letter how impoſſible it was to tell her how happy ſhe had made him. He was ſurprized that he received no anſwer to it. He called on her in an hour afterwards, and heard ſhe was out: he wrote to her to complain of his hard fate, and had the hard fate to receive no anſwer; he viſited her, to reproach her with her ingratitude, and did not find her at home; in ſhort, he ſpent four days in repeated calls, meſſages, and letters, before he found out that the lady had reſolved never to ſee, hear, or think of him any more.

He curſed his ſtars on the diſcovery, and, a minute and a half afterwards, he bleſſed them again. Miſs Sedate, who had never in all this period once entered into his thoughts, now appeared before his imagination in all her charms again; nay, we will not venture to aſſert, that ſhe did not gain ſome additional ones from the diſdain of her rival. The lover congratulated himſelf on the diſintereſted air with which he could now viſit her father: he determined on doing it inſtantly, and ordered his valet to prepare for dreſſing him to the beſt advantage.

His hair was powdered, his heart full of joy at the thought of his intended viſit, and his face dreſſed in ſmiles of ſecurity; when, as he was getting into his chariot, and had given the word for Queen Square, the equipage of Miſs Oddly paſſed by, and the lady gave him a very polite flying nod. Whether ſhe meant this in contempt, or in very civility, we ſhall not take upon us to determine; but certain it is, that the lover returned it by a bow to the very ground: the colour left his face, and the thoughts he had before been ſo full of, his heart: he drew back into the houſe; ordered the coachman to put up; and, in the eagerneſs and uncertainty of his ſoul, determined to write to her. He knew by the hour, and the way ſhe went, whither ſhe was going; he could not but think it worth while to call her back, if

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in his power: he knew complaints and intreaties would only make him the object of her contempt, perhaps, of that of half her acquaintance; he ſummoned up all his gallantry, and diſpatched the following cavalier letter after her—

'MADAM,

'YOU looked juſt now as if you 'was willing I ſhould come and 'ſee you. Upon my word, I ſhall be 'very happy if you'll let me. If not, 'your own pleaſure be obeyed; but, for 'old acquaintance ſake, do me the little 'favour of letting me know it. I am, 'very ſincerely, with a great deal of 'eſteem, your obedient humble ſervant,

'G. EDWARDS.'

It was with a painful impatience that Mr. Edwards waited the return of his meſſenger, but it was not very long that he was kept in it. The lady, who was always as much at home in other people's houſes as her own, no ſooner read the billet, than ſhe ordered pen and ink, and, making a polite apology to the company, in which the words Money, Buſineſs, and Importance, had their peculiar emphaſis, ſhe wrote the following anſwer—

'SIR,

'TO do you juſtice, I muſt own your 'letter an original. There is a 'happy familiarity in it; and I think 'great reaſon. You ſee I give it the 'applauſe it deſerves; I ſuppoſe you 'meant no more from it. I would not 'pay ſo ill a compliment to your diſ'cernment, to ſay you miſtook my looks: 'I know you only banter me, for put'ting on an appearance of civility to a 'man I ought to hate and deſpiſe. Such 'are your merits, but your ſentence is 'milder: I ſhall only forget you. Re'member that we are ſtrangers, and you 'will do every thing in your power that 'can oblige

'E. ODDLY.'

CHAP. IX.

OUR HERO RECEIVES VERY UNEXPECTEDLY A FRESH SUPPLY, BEFORE HE WANTS IT.

THERE is no circumſtance of life in which a man ſo much feels the advantage of having, as the vulgar phraſe runs, *two ſtrings to his bow*, as in a love affair. He who, if he had but one miſtreſs, would perhaps hang or drown himſelf in conſequence of her cruelty, while he has two, is always ſure to make this moſt terrible of all misfortunes, as it is uſually ſuppoſed, turn infinitely to his advantage: inſtead of taking a pair of oars for London Bridge, with his pockets loaded as heavily as thoſe of the facetious Mr. Pipes were by a brother novel-monger of the preſent age, in revenge to the inſolence of a chairman; inſtead of making the nooſe in the fatal garter, that very garter the relentleſs fair, in happier days, had employed her delicate fingers in knitting for him, he ſeeks the manſions of the rival beauty, throws himſelf at her feet with a redoubled ardour, his languiſhings for the other miſtreſs all turn into tenderneſſes to this, and he owes his ſucceſs, where it is worth having, to his diſappointment, where it would have been a misfortune to have ſucceeded.

Such is the general courſe of ſlighted love, where there is another object in readineſs: but, gentle reader, remark that we are ſpeaking general truths only in this place; and if thou ſhouldſt, in thy own great ſagacity, chance to apply them to the preſent circumſtance of our ſtory, thou wilt do more than we meant to bid thee, and the errors thou leadeſt thyſelf into, be they all on thine own head.

All that we mean to infer from this digreſſion, is, that Mr. Edwards, having another miſtreſs in Petto, bore the loſs of the former with ſomewhat more heroiſm and unconcern than he probably would have done, had it fallen upon him at a time when he was more unprovided.

There needed but little ſagacity to diſcover, that he had thoroughly, perfectly, and for ever, loſt his former love: the reſolution was to ſecure the other as ſoon as he could. We have already had occaſion to obſerve, that though Miſs Oddly had many accompliſhments, beauty was not of the number. We are apt to believe that, if it had, it would have loſt much of it's meri, at the preſent period, with Mr. Edwards: nothing takes off ſo much from a woman's perſonal charms in the eyes of her lover as his being angry with her, unleſs it be her being angry herſelf. Miſs Sedate's natural

natural advantages in this respect, appeared doubled on this occasion; the lover would not easily have been brought to suppose, at this time, that an archangel was quite so handsome, quite so wise, or quite so full of sweetness. He determined on visiting her the next day, and devoted a new suit of embroidery to aid him in his attack, by making it's first appearance before her.

To say, whether it were Mr. Edwards's good or evil genius that constantly prevented him from putting in execution his designs upon this lady, will require some farther period of time, than can be comprized within the bounds of this history, to determine; indeed, some time that is not yet elapsed must runs it's course first, for I determine against all judgments of the events of marriages made during the first six weeks: so it was, however, that, with all this admiration in his head, and all this love in his heart, he never saw her after the first meeting.

If thou supposest this the contrivance of the author, O reader! rather than of fate, thou wilt be apt to say, he was reduced to a very shabby one, when thou heareſt that the incident which put the final period to all this determined courtship, took it's origin from no greater a beginning, than his receiving this very evening a note from his uncle Jeremy, to tell him that he had some particular business, and wished to see him the next morning.

Mr. Edwards was polite enough not to go to bed before three o'clock, and consequently not to rise before noon: it was one o'clock before he arrived at his uncle's apartment, where he found the business was, that the old gentleman had heard from his father, and was about to send him over his accounts. He added—'I cannot suppose, nephew, that 'you are in want of money at this time; 'but, as I can't properly answer any 'draft of yours after these accounts are 'sent over, till I have your father's 'answer about them, here is an odd 'sum of thirteen hundred pounds more, 'which you may as well take at present, 'and I will add it with the usual con-'ditions to the bill.'

The young fellow's heart leaped at the name of the money. He little imagined what were his uncle's motives in offering it: he accepted it with the warmest returns of gratitude, and promised to be as prudent as if he had not seen a sixpence of it. The old fellow, who had now lent all the money he could raise on so good security, and at so good interest, knew he had made all the market he was to expect of the family. He sent over his accounts by the next ship, and very easily reconciled himself to the light he must appear in to the father, from the consideration of the advantage he had made of him. The unlimited bill of credit he had given, the old fellow knew, was sufficient to bear him out in law; and he was only unhappy, that he had not been able to command more ready money, of which he might have made the same noble and honest advantage.

CHAP. X.

MR. EDWARDS FALLS IN THE WAY OF A NEW ADVENTURE.

WHILE uncle Jeremy's thoughts were all rapture on the success of his schemes upon the distant father, his nephew's were not less elate with the prospect of his amour, and with the sum he had so unexpectedly become possessed of. His chariot was at the outer gate of Scotland Yard, and he was tripping to it with great alacrity, to get home and prepare for the enchanting scene of the afternoon, when he was stopped by the execution of a most masterly hand, on a fine-toned harpsichord, accompanied by a voice which was easily distinguished to be a female one, and whose sweetness made every other sound disagreeable.

Our hero had taste enough for musick to be struck with this performance, and judgment enough to admire it: he turned his eye toward the place whence it came, and through the opening that a half-drawn up blue silk curtain gave into an elegant parlour, he discovered the person to whom he owed his entertainment.

It happened that Mrs. Conquest, for the lady was no other than that accomplished fair one, had turned her head toward the window, at the very instant when his eyes were directed to it. If thou hast seen Mrs. Conquest, gentle reader, we need not tell thee what were the sensations in a young fellow's heart, who

who had, before she looked toward him, been in a very good humour to admire her; if thou hast that pleasure to come, it is worth purchasing at the expence of an empire. The state of Mr. Edwards's heart, at this moment, we can no more describe than himself could, if he had been then called upon to do it. The lady blushed on seeing she was observed; and the lover, for so from this instant we are to call him, retired slowly to Will's coffee-house.

He was not lucky enough to find any body he knew there; but his impatience was too great to let him think of punctilios. He sat down at a table where there were four young sea-officers, and asked them, not without great emotion, if they could possibly inform him who it was that lived over the way? A smile appeared upon every one of their faces in an instant; and the short sentences, 'Do you tell him; no, do you tell him,' were bandied about from one to another of them, around and across the table, with great alacrity, attended by many speaking looks and shrugs for several minutes.

Our hero told them, he was very happy to find every one of them was able to give him the information he had taken the liberty to ask; but he begged, in consideration of his own impatience and uneasiness, they would settle it at once who should do him the friendly office. The burst of a short laugh from every quarter accompanied the word *impatience*; and, in regard to the other term, something was whispered about his not being kept in such a state very long, that was very far from being displeasing to him.

He pressed his suit; but at length the eldest of the company, as the laugh declined among them, looked grave, and said—'No, d—n it, 'tis pity; don't 'say any thing about her.' He got up as he spoke; the others followed his example; and our hero, when he thought himself on the brink of hearing a history that he found himself greatly interested in, had the mortification to see he was left alone; with nothing to comfort him, but what little ease he had received from the peculiar emphasis with which one of the company had pronounced after him the word *uneasy*.

CHAP. XI.

MR. EDWARDS MAKES VIOLENT LOVE TO THE CELEBRATED MRS. CONQUEST.

MISS Sedate had long proved a good standing dish with our hero, that he thought he could have recourse to on any emergency; but it was her fate still to be set by for every new kickshaw. As she had been before disregarded for the sake of Miss Oddly, she was now destined to the same fate on account of Mrs. Conquest. There was something in the face of that lady that our hero found irresistible. He threw himself into his chariot, and drove home to concert the manner in which he should make his approaches.

The whole world cannot shew a greater instance of what dreadful consequences perfect inadvertence and a too careless gaiety of spirit in a woman may be attended with, than in Mrs. Conquest; whose virtue, though as free from stain or blemish as her face, yet has not been able to preserve her character from being hacked and mangled, as we have just seen, even in publick, by a number of butcherly ruffians.

It was the fortune of this amiable creature to be married early to an old husband. A publick employment that gentleman was vested with, naturally and necessarily drew a multitude of gay people about him: a young woman, with less beauty and fewer accomplishments than Mrs. Conquest was possessed of, under the circumstance of being so married, and so visited, could not have failed of many addresses. She received them all alike, diverted herself with bantering and laughing at them, much as we have just seen Miss Oddly serve our hero, and constantly entertained her husband with the progress every one had made: it is as certain, that not one of the friends of this gentleman ever did him the injury that almost every friend is ready to do almost every husband whose wife is handsome, as that every one of them desired it. The natural consequence of a repulse of this kind, given to a rascal, is his boasting that he has succeeded. There were not wanting some people of this stamp among

among the number of Mrs. Conqueſt's admirers; and, as her unreſtrained behaviour to every one of them had given too much appearance for ſuſpicion, there was not one of them who told a falſity of this kind, but was believed. The men very readily gave into this, as it flattered their own expectations in regard to her; and the women were glad to propagate it, as it took from the character of one whoſe perſon and qualifications rendered her the rival of the whole ſex.

We are all naturally the laſt people in the world who hear any ill of ourſelves; and, when we do hear it with a conſciouſneſs of not having deſerved it, we are apt to treat it with a contempt that is very well reconcileable to juſtice, though by no means to prudence. Mrs. Conqueſt had no idea that the world in general had taken up ſo unjuſt an opinion of her, and had always treated what hints ſhe had received of it, whether from friends or enemies, with an inſolent diſregard, which, though it very well ſquared with her own juſt ſentiments on the ſubject, yet, under the unhappy miſtake the world was in, it gave thoſe who thought unfairly of her an idea of a character that was not above ſuſpicion, but hardened againſt accuſation.

Such was the ſituation of Mrs. Conqueſt after the death of her huſband, when the hero of our ſtory added one to the number of her admirers. He was thoroughly in love with what he had ſeen of her, and little imagined, that the face he had been ſo charmed with at a diſtance, would appear infinitely handſomer on a nearer examination; much leſs that, with all it's merit ſet in the beſt light, it was the laſt thing that a man of diſcernment would find out to admire in her who poſſeſſed it. The ill ſucceſs of his dangling ſcheme with Miſs Oddly determined him on the bringing matters to a more ſpeedy iſſue in this adventure: the character he had conceived of the lady, from what he learned at Will's, gave him all the encouragement he could deſire to proceed upon a bold plan; and he determined that very night as the period of his ſiege. He ordered the embroidered ſuit, that was to have introduced him to the good graces of Miſs Sedate, to be brought out; gave directions to his valet to be more than ordinarily careful in dreſſing his hair; and, before he ſat down to the operation, he diſpatched the following card to the lady—

'MADAM,

'AN accident ſhewed me this morn-
'ing that, till then, I had not
'ſeen the fineſt woman in the world:
'you won't blame, or wonder at my
'being deſirous of repeating that plea-
'ſure. I beg you will do me the honour
'of ſuffering me to wait on you this
'afternoon, which I ſhall eternally re-
'member, as an infinite obligation laid
'on, Madam, your very obedient and
'devoted ſervant,

'G. EDWARDS.'

The anſwer brought back was verbal, and was, that the lady did not recollect that ſhe knew any body of the name of Edwards; but that, whoever the perſon was, ſhe deſired to ſee him.

It is very poſſible the lover might not underſtand by this meſſage, exactly what the lady meant who ſent it: it appeared to him in no other light, than that ſhe was willing to receive the addreſſes of a ſtranger, be he who he would. Whether Mrs. Conqueſt had intended exactly that by it, the reader may poſſibly diſcover in the following chapter.

CHAP. XII.

IN WHICH MR. EDWARDS AND MRS. CONQUEST PART MUCH BETTER FRIENDS THAN THEY MET.

THE hour of viſiting arrived; the beau was equipped for victory; the coachman drove up to the door with a peculiar flouriſh; the footman made the whole yard re-echo with the larum he ſounded at it; and the hero was received by a ſervant out of livery at the door, and conducted to the parlour.

The lady was reading, or pretending to read, when he entered: ſhe drew herſelf up to two inches more than her ordinary height, as ſhe received him; and, without laying down her book, told him, it was impoſſible for her to gueſs how ſhe came to be honoured with that viſit. Short and ſimple as the purport of this ſentence was, there was ſomething in the lady's manner, as ſhe delivered it, that perfectly convinced our adventurer he had made a very unhappy blunder,

and been guilty of an unpardonable crime in consequence of it. There was something of a dignity without affectation, a commanding superiority, without the least tincture of insolence, in the lady's deportment, that struck and confounded him too much to give him leave even to reply.

He was standing in a perplexed silence, and making as foolish a figure as ever a fine gentleman did under a disappointment; when the lady, pointing to a chair, told him—'I don't know, Sir, that the 'want of a proper respect in you can 'justify me in an omission of the same 'kind; I beg you will sit down: and, 'Sir,' continued she, 'not that I can 'resent a thing of this kind, from a per- 'son who is an entire stranger to me; 'but, for my own satisfaction, I beg 'you to inform me what can have led 'you to so strange a step as this.'

The great composure with which Mrs. Conquest spoke this, had some effect upon the ruffled thoughts of our hero; he began to come to himself a little, and, after a short pause, told her, that he should not attempt to make any apology, because there was no submission that could be adequate to the offence; but that he thought it justice to herself, as well as to the persons who led him into his error, to acknowledge that the fault was entirely his own; that the origin of it was mere unlucky accident; that he had enquired after her, on his accidentally seeing her in the morning; and that, having been but ill qualified to describe her on so slight a view, he had done her so little justice in the attempt, that the gentlemen he had applied to for information had indisputably understood him of some other woman, and had given him an account of that person, which had authorized his writing the note which by great mistake he had sent to her.

The lady, with the same composure of countenance—for she is, of all women in the world, most mistress of herself—asked him, as a farther act of friendship, to tell her of whom he had that information. Mr. Edwards thought the least reparation he could attempt making the lady, for such an injury as he had done her, was telling her the truth; he confessed that he received it from some strangers, of whom he had made his enquiry at the coffee-house just by.

Mrs. Conquest could not refrain from telling him, with a blush, that it was not well done to enquire after a woman of any degree of reputation in so unguarded a manner; but, recovering herself from this little confusion, she proceeded to ask him, with the same coolness with which she had proposed the preceding questions, whether the persons from whom he had received this information appeared to be of the navy; Mr. Edwards answered, that he believed they were.

All the resolution of Mrs. Conquest could not support her against the shock she felt at this reply; the woman overcame the heroine in her disposition, and honest tears proclaimed her innocence more than all the asseverations in the world could have done. She suppressed them after a few moments; and, recovering her calmness again, delivered her sense of the incident in the following words. 'I am convinced, Sir, of a 'thing I have often had reason to su- 'spect, but would never permit myself 'to believe before. There was a con- 'fused perplexity in your first apology, 'that shewed me you did not perfectly 'believe yourself in what you told me. 'You have made no mistake: I am not 'ashamed to tell you I am the person 'these people meant by their account to 'you; for shame is the proper attend- 'ant on guilt, not on the accusation of 'it. I shall convince you, Sir, that 'the character you are pleased to enter- 'tain of me, does not belong to me; 'but, in justice to myself, I ought also 'to tell you, that I have been unhappy 'enough to be the object of very un- 'warrantable pursuits in many of the 'people of that rank, and am afraid 'my not having listened to any of them 'has laid me under an aspersion that 'nothing but my having acted a con- 'trary part could have justified.'

Mr. Edwards arose slowly and trembling from his chair; and walking up to the lady, with the utmost modesty and reserve in his deportment, took hold of her hand. 'I don't know how to ex- 'press, Madam,' says he, 'the asto- 'nishment and confusion you have filled 'me with: I never can forgive myself 'the insult I have offered you, nor 'think of any reparation, but the con- 'vincing the persons who misinformed 'me in this shameful manner, that they 'did so. But this is trifling. You

'see

'see before you, Madam, an honeſt, innocent, undeſigning fellow, with a fortune equal to almoſt any woman's expectations: give me leave to convince you how perfectly ſatisfied I am of my firſt miſtake, by offering myſelf and that fortune to you upon your own conditions. I am ſenſible I can't be worthy of you; I am ſenſible nothing can be worthy of you; but I am more ſenſible that I have ſeen too much to be able to ſupport the loſs of you.'

The lady, who had not, during this whole ſpeech, recovered herſelf from the confuſion her own declaration had involved her in, as ſoon as ſhe had recollected herſelf, replied—'I am not to deny to you, that I have heard much of this romantick way of talk before. I have no reaſon to imagine you ſerious; nor, if I did, is there any thing I could anſwer to it. We are ſtrangers, and I beg we may continue ſo. I cannot but acknowledge, your viſit has been the cauſe of more uneaſineſs to me than I have ever felt before, or ſhall be ever capable of feeling again; but you have been the innocent cauſe of it, and I forgive you freely. I think the buſineſs of this ſtrange viſit is at an end; and I beg you will not think it intentional rudeneſs, that I requeſt you to put an end to it; for, upon my word, I am ill, and muſt be excuſed from having company any longer.'

Mr. Edwards, who was perfectly in earneſt in his laſt declaration, was in no humour to part upon theſe conditions; he preſſed his having leave to wait on her again very importunately, but was refuſed: the lady at length was reduced to ſay—'Indeed, you oblige me to tell you this is not uſing me well; I cannot, will not, ſtay any longer with you, nor is there any appearance of reaſon why I ſhould think of ſeeing you again.' Even this, ſome as it was, could not ſend off our lover on ſo bad terms; he continued, with infinite ſubmiſſions and apologies, to entreat ſhe would permit him to ſee her, if it were but once more; and, in fine, extorted from her a promiſe, that on condition ſome perſon whom ſhe ought to believe would tell her he was a proper perſon for a woman of character to be viſited by, ſhe would conſent to his coming ſome other afternoon.

CHAP. XIII.

THE FRIEND OF OUR HERO IS ENGAGED IN A VERY IMPORTANT NEGOTIATION.

MRS. Conqueſt could not well ſuppoſe that the conditions ſhe had exacted could be very hard ones upon a perſon of her new lover's appearance and deportment; but ſo it was, that if ſhe had commanded him to bring certificates from another world of his qualifications, the difficulty could not have appeared to him, at firſt ſight, much greater.

Mr. Edwards was, indeed, in a ſituation that many a man of figure in this town is in, though he very little ſuſpects it of himſelf; he was known to no creature that was worth knowing. It was hardly more than a month that he had been in Europe; in that time he had made but very few acquaintances, and thoſe were not only among people who in reality knew nothing of him, but whom he had very good reaſon to be aſhamed of.

It ſometimes came into his head to ſend his uncle, who could aſſure the lady of the true ſtate of his affairs; but his figure and appearance, he dreaded, would have a very bad effect on ſuch a commiſſion. While he was in the midſt of this perplexity, revolving every thing, but what was of moſt importance, in his mind, Mr. Spence, who had a right to much more of his attention than the hurry of his late purſuits had given him an opportunity of paying him, came in on a viſit.

The youth no ſooner ſaw him, than he flew into his arms. 'Deareſt, deareſt friend!' ſays he, 'I condemn myſelf of ingratitude and baſeneſs, while I tell you, that you have never entered into my thoughts, though you are the only man in the world who can do me a ſervice, that my whole life, ſpent in gratitude and acknowledgments, can never repay you.' He proceeded to tell him the nature of his ſituation, and the neceſſity of ſome man of worth and honour appearing to his character.

His friend very readily undertook the office, but told him there was a difficulty he did not ſeem to ſee in the way; which

was, that he was as utterly unknown as himself to the lady, and indeed to the world, and consequently his testimony could be of very little weight in his favour. 'Go, my dear friend,' replied the youth; 'go, and be charmed as much 'as I am. You will find a woman who 'does not take up her rules of judging 'from the customs or opinions of the 'world. She has judgment enough to 'distinguish merit and honour wherever 'it is placed, and will not be a moment 'at a loss to know what dependance she 'is to place on your testimony. Go, 'and may success attend you! for to 'me there is but one road to happiness 'in the world, and she alone can guide 'to it.'

The next morning was fixed on for the visit of the friend; and the necessary preparations were made for it, by a card from that gentleman, to inform her that Mr. Spence would do himself the honour of waiting on her, to inform her of the family and affairs of the gentleman whom she had seen the day before. The prudence and caution of Mr. Spence would have objected to the terms Family, and Affairs, as hinting at something too particular in the nature of his embassy: but Mr. Edwards was much in earnest; he knew this would be putting the whole affair in a very forward situation; he knew that this was the very business upon which he had at length obtained her permission to send a friend to her; he was heartily determined not to lose so much ground; and he depended on her good understanding for her not excepting against a freedom which, however far he carried it, she would remember she had given him a right to.

Notwithstanding these reasons, which were all very good ones, for the adding these two words to the note, our hero's noble courage was hardly enough to support him during the interval of the sending and receiving an answer to it: the moment the messenger produced the card, he tore it open; and had no sooner read in it, that the lady would be glad to see Mr. Spence at one, than he concluded he had succeeded to his utmost expectations, and congratulated himself very heartily on so amazing, so unexpected a happiness, as he now assured himself he was upon the point of possessing.

Mr. Spence, who knew the precipitate temper of his young friend, though he had determined, however much against his inclinations, to execute his commission with the utmost punctuality, yet thought it proper, before he gave the character of his friend, to enquire into that of the person to whom he was to give it. He succeeded in this no better than the lover himself had done: but he determined not to shock his ears with a repetition of what he had been told, till he had found, by the behaviour of the lady herself, how much truth there was in it. He was punctual to the appointment; and, if the reader's curiosity should prompt him to enquire what passed at this interview, he will find it recorded in the following chapter.

CHAP. XIV.

A MEETING BETWEEN TWO VERY ACCOMPLISHED PEOPLE.

THOUGH Mr. Spence had gone to Mrs. Conquest with no better an opinion of her than the lover had carried with him on his visit, he was almost as immediately convinced of the wrong he had done her in harbouring it, as his friend had been. He did not think it was his business to give the least hint of suspicions, which he assured himself, from her manner and deportment, were absolutely groundless, but was impatient to enter on the business of his embassy. The lady interrupted him with an apology for her own conduct in seeing him on such an errand, and continued to tell him—'The gentle-'man, Sir, in whose favour you come, 'is an entire stranger to me: I have 'seen him only once, and the cir-'cumstances under which we then met, 'were such as might have prejudiced 'me much more against him than my 'receiving this visit from you will make 'it appear that I am. I would not 'condemn a person for being misled 'into a fault, as I would one who was 'intentionally guilty of it; but though 'I have forgot the offence, I am to do 'myself the justice of assuring you, 'this meeting with you has been the 'effect of his too earnestly requesting 'it, not of any inclination I can have 'to talk farther upon so romantick a

'subject

'subject as you do me the honour to 'engage yourself about.'

'If it were possible, Madam,' replied Mr. Spence, 'for you to know 'the circumstances under which I plead 'for this gentleman's having permission 'to wait upon you, you would pay a 'more than usual attention to it. I acknowledge to you, Madam,' continued he, 'that I scarce know any thing 'that could make me so unhappy, as 'his succeeding in his addresses to you: 'but he knows nothing of this, he confides in me as an honest man, and employs me as a friend. My own partial views shall give place to his happiness; and I will act up to the confidence he has reposed in me, by assuring you that he is a youth of uncommon qualifications of mind, free 'from every taint of vice, and has a 'heart full of every virtue: his fortune is such as few women could except against; and I am very sensible, 'Madam,' concluded he, 'of your deserts when I speak it; but I must add, 'that I think him every way worthy 'even of you, and believe, from my 'soul, that he will be the author of as 'much happiness to you, as you to 'him.'

Mrs. Conquest was charmed with the disinterested, plain sincerity, of the person who spoke to her:

'There is a noble freedom
'Dwells with the great, unknown to fawning sycophants,
'That claims the privilege of being believ'd.'

She did not question the sincerity of the least accent he had uttered, and began to think of the young fellow in a much more favourable light than she had hitherto done. There was something, however, in the beginning of Mr. Spence's declaration in favour of her friend, that touched her, she knew not why, very nearly: 'You tell me, Sir,' says she, 'that yourself are nearly interested in 'the event of what you have undertaken 'to plead for; and, if I understand you 'right, you are to be unhappy if your 'friend succeeds. I cannot but esteem 'a person who could plead so warmly 'as you have done for a cause that he 'could only be made happy by losing; 'and there appears no reason to me why 'I should sacrifice the peace of a person 'I esteem to the request of one concerning whom my heart or my thoughts 'are not at all interested. You must 'pardon me, Sir, if I make it a condition of my seeing this gentleman again, 'that I hear first from you, with all that 'sincerity with which you have hitherto 'spoken, what it is that so immediately 'concerns you in the success of this 'attempt.'

The visitor pleaded very earnestly the impossibility of his explaining himself to her on that head: he told her it would not be honest; that it were betraying his trust in the basest manner, even for interested views, and being the enemy of the man who claimed and merited his friendship, and to whom he had engaged himself as a friend. He begged her to pardon and excuse him; and not to remember, that in his warmth for the cause, in his eagerness to be believed, he had dropped, through inadvertency, a word that seemed to make against it.

Mrs. Conquest replied—'Still, Sir, I 'see you are the same worthy and disinterested man. I applaud, and shall 'always esteem, you for it: but you will 'pardon me, that I find myself now 'concerned in the circumstance; and that 'I tell you, as I at present can have no 'pain in refusing to receive your friend's 'visits, I will not give you any by receiving them, nor engage my thoughts 'any farther on a subject in which I see 'perplexities and intricacies that will 'but ill bear unravelling.'

The lady persisted in her resolution; and the utmost that the visitor could prevail with her to grant was, that himself, not his friend, should see her again in the afternoon.

CHAP. XV.

A LADY IS INTRODUCED TO MRS. CONQUEST'S ACQUAINTANCE.

WHEN the reader shall have gone through this short chapter, he will find that it is hardly possible to conceive a more nice or difficult part than Mr. Spence had to act on this occasion. He returned to his friend, and resolutely refused to give him any farther account of the success of his visit, than that he was to repeat it in four or five hours. The visible anxiety and uneasiness in the face of this gentleman during the period of

of his short stay, for he could by no means be prevailed with to remain longer than just to give this account of his expedition, gave our hero but a very bad presage of his success: he took his leave of him at the door, full of new thoughts of Miss Sedate; and could not refrain from telling him, he believed it was hardly worth his while to go to the other again.

The hour of visiting approached; Mrs. Conquest was as impatient for an explanation as the reader may possibly be by this time: a rap at the door proclaimed the arrival of company; and a minute after appeared Mr. Spence, and in his hand a beautiful young creature, whose unaffected modesty struck the lady, at first sight, in a very favourable manner.

The servants were no sooner dismissed, than Mr. Spence began—'You insisted, 'Madam, on my explaining an unlucky 'slip of my tongue this morning. You 'will say I am a villain when I have 'complied; but I can sooner bear that 'sentence, than totally ruin my friend's 'cause, by refusing to do it. I am to 'begin by telling you I am myself all a 'cheat; but it is from honest, honourable motives. My name is not Spence, 'but Wentworth. This lady is my 'niece: he who is now your lover, perhaps once was hers. Imagine not that 'either she or I have any thing to accuse 'him of: we only can guess that he honoured her with his esteem; the match 'would have been unequal, and he obeyed his father in leaving her and his 'native country to make this voyage to 'England. That no thoughts of his 'unlucky passion for her might give him 'disquiet, or prevent his pursuing every 'step his father had planned out for him, 'I, at her request, informed him she was 'dead. I love and honour him for his 'whole behaviour in this difficult scene; 'and have attended him to England, 'unknown even to himself as any way 'concerned in this lady's cause, only 'determined to do every thing to serve 'him. I had not been here ten days, 'before another ship arrived, in which 'the unhappy girl was a passenger: she 'has been with me ever since; but she 'has never even wished to see him, as 'it would have laid an imputation on 'me of having poorly contrived a scene 'for his destruction. I think she would 'rather see him more happy with an'other, than less so with herself. I 'have brought her, to assure you, Ma'dam, that she has no right, no preten'sions, to a thought of him; and, when 'you have been informed of that, to tell 'you, that the misery it must be to me 'to see so worthy a creature unhappy, 'was the motive I felt for wishing this 'deserving, this amiable, young man, 'might not succeed in his addresses to 'you, even while I was urging every 'circumstance possible in his favour.'

Miss Wentworth was silent during this whole relation; but tears, more eloquent than words, pleaded her cause so powerfully in the breast of Mrs. Conquest, that when, at length, she summoned strength enough to say—'Indeed, 'Madam, I am neither deserving of 'him, nor have any right to the least 'favourable thought from him;' that lady answered—'That I will never rob 'you of him, is most certain. I can 'have no partiality for a man I have 'barely seen; and if I had, I should be 'base not to sacrifice it to so infinitely 'better founded and more rational a 'claim. I almost envy him the happi'ness he must have in calling you his 'wife, and that gentleman his relation: 'but I beg of you both, that I may 'have some share in the bringing it 'about. Mr. Wentworth,' continued she, 'send instantly to tell your friend I 'shall be glad to see him; and leave this 'lady with me, to receive him. Be not 'under any apprehensions that I can 'change my resolution: I should even 'despise him for not giving me up to 'such a passion, if he could be wretch 'enough to hesitate about it.'

The lady was peremptory in her commands, the niece more than consented to the proposal, and the uncle went himself to send the lover. A thousand times, in his way thither, he had a mind to disclose the whole to him; but this would have been betraying the confidence Mrs. Conquest had reposed in him; not to mention another consideration, that, in spite of all his hardy virtue, would have it's weight with him: he at length resolved to deliver his message punctually, and without addition; and the lover, who little expected so favourable a one, much less imagined the real purport of it, set off for Scotland Yard on the instant, in very visible raptures.

CHAP.

R. Smirke, del. Birrell. sculp.

late II.

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CHAP. XVI.

OUR HERO'S FATE DETERMINED IN A MANNER VERY UNEXPECTED TO HIMSELF.

MRS. Conqueſt had placed both Miſs Wentworth and herſelf full in the lover's view as he came into the room. He ſtarted a moment as he entered the door, but he made only one ſtep from it to the place where his firſt love ſat: he ſunk tenderly upon her neck, and was imprinting a thouſand kiſſes, and ſaying ten thouſand tender things to her, without perceiving that ſhe was a motionleſs ſtatue in his arms. Mrs. Conqueſt, who had ſuppoſed ſuch an event natural enough to be expected, was better prepared for it; and while the lover was raving out—'Was it only my 'fond imagination that thou wert re-'ſtored to life? Art thou dead, as I have 'all this time thought thee?' Her ſervants made ſo good uſe of cold water, the hartſhorn bottle, and the other family remedies uſual on theſe occaſions, that the brighteſt eyes in the world opened again, and gave, while they received it, a happineſs that, as ſcarce any body has been the object of ſuch a ſurprize, ſcarce any body can form an adequate idea of.

A freſh profuſion of tenderneſs now found it's way from our lover; and he had exhauſted every ſource of tranſport, before he was at leiſure to remember in whoſe houſe he was, and under what circumſtances. He was going to look grave; but Mrs. Conqueſt ſaved him the trouble of an apology, by telling what ſhe ſhould have thought of him if he had not given occaſion for one; and concluded with ſaying—'Sir, I have no right or 'title to give up in you to this lady; 'but, if I had, I would reſign it.'

Little ceremony was neceſſary between two people who by this time knew one another's minds ſo well as our new-met lovers. Mr. Wentworth and Mrs. Conqueſt had the pleaſure of ſeeing the ceremony performed in two or three days. When the new-married people had revelled a month, in perfect happineſs, in town, it was judged proper to think of returning to their native country. The young gentleman arrived there two days after the death of his father: he found himſelf in poſſeſſion of a very ample fortune, though not quite ſo magnificent a one as had been repreſented; and he was no ſooner convinced of the villainy of his uncle, in the uſe he had made of his neceſſities, than he came to a reſolution of repaying him the borrowed money, with lawful intereſt only. This the old gentleman was obliged to accept; and, after heartily curſing his whole family, and all the relations in the world, he left it at his death, which happened about eight months afterwards, to the faithful Ruth.

FINIS.

THE

INVISIBLE SPY.

BY EXPLORABILIS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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THE

INVISIBLE SPY.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

BOOK I.

CHAP. I.

INTRODUCTION.

TO THE PUBLICK.

I Have obſerved that when a new book begins to make a noiſe in the world, every one is deſirous of becoming acquainted with the author; and this impatience increaſes, the more he endeavours to conceal himſelf. I expect to hear an hundred different names inſcribed to the Inviſible, ſome of which I ſhould, perhaps, be proud of, others as much aſhamed to own. Some will doubtleſs take me for a philoſoper, others for a fool; with ſome I ſhall paſs for a man of pleaſure, with others for a ſtoick; ſome will look upon me as a courtier, others as a patriot: but whether I am any one of theſe, or whether I am even a man or a woman, they will find it, after all their conjectures, as difficult to diſcover as the longitude.

I think it therefore a duty incumbent on my good-nature to put an early ſtop to ſuch fruitleſs inquiſitions; and alſo at the ſame time to ſatisfy, in ſome meaſure, the curioſity of the publick, by giving an account of the means by which I attained the gift of inviſibility I poſſeſs.

Know then, gentle reader, that in the former part of my life it was my good fortune to do a ſignal ſervice to a certain venerable perſon ſince dead: he was deſcended from the ancient Magi of the Chaldeans, inherited their wiſdom, and was well verſed in all the myſtick ſecrets of their art. Beſides his gratitude for the good offices I had done him, he ſeemed to have found ſomething in my humour and manner of behaviour that extremely pleaſed him; he would often have me with him, and entertained me with diſcourſes on things of which otherwiſe I ſhould have had no idea.

But it was not long that I enjoyed this benefit. He ſent for me one day, to let me know he was much indiſpoſed, and deſired I would come immediately to him: I went, and found him, not as I expected, in bed, but ſitting in an eaſy chair. After the firſt ſalutations were over, and I had placed myſelf pretty near him—'My good friend,' ſaid he, taking hold of my hand, 'I feel that I 'muſt ſhortly quit this buſy world; the 'ſilver cord is looſened, the golden bowl 'is broken, every thing within me haſ-'tens to a ſpeedy diſſolution; and I was 'willing to ſee you once more before I 'ſet out on my journey to that land of 'ſhades; as Hamlet truly ſays—

"That undiſcover'd country, from whoſe
"bourn
"No traveller returns."

'As the remembrance of you,' continued he, 'will certainly accompany 'me beyond the grave, I would wiſh, 'methinks, to hold ſome place in yours

'while you remain on earth, to the end 'that I may not be quite a ſtranger to 'you when we meet in eternity. I have 'no land, nor tenements, nor gold, nor 'ſilver, to bequeath, yet am not deſtitute 'of ſomething which may be equally 'worthy your acceptance.'

Then, after a little pauſe—'Take 'this,' added he, giving me a key; 'it 'will admit you into a cloſet which no 'one but myſelf has ever entered. I call 'it my cabinet of curioſities, and I be-'lieve you will find ſuch things there as 'will deſerve that name: chuſe from 'among them any one that moſt ſuits 'your fancy, and accept it as a token 'of my love.'

He ſaid no more, but rung his bell for a ſervant, who, by his orders, conducted me by a narrow winding ſtair-caſe to the top of the houſe, and left me at a little door, which I opened with the key that had been given me, and found myſelf in a ſmall ſquare room, built after the manner of a turret. All the furniture was an old wicker chair, with a piece of blanket thrown careleſsly over it, I ſuppoſe to defend the ſage from the air when he ſat there to ſtudy: near it was placed a table, not leſs antiquated, with two globes, a ſtandiſh with ſome paper, and ſeveral books in manuſcript, but wrote in characters too unintelligible for me to comprehend any part of what they contained. Juſt in the middle of the cieling hung a pretty large chryſtal ball, filled with a ſhining yellowiſh powder, and this inſcription paſted on it—

THE ILLUSIVE POWDER.

A ſmall quantity of this powder, blown through the quill of a porcupine when the Moon is in Aries, raiſes ſplendid viſions in the people's eyes; and, if applied when the ſame planet is in Cancer, ſpreads univerſal terror and diſmay.

I eaſily perceived that this was one of the curioſities my friend had mentioned, and a great one indeed it was; but, as I had neither intereſt nor inclination to impoſe upon my fellow-creatures, I judged it fitter for the poſſeſſion of ſome one or other of the mighty rulers of the earth.

I then turned towards the walls, which were all hung round with teleſcopes, horoſcopes, microſcopes, taliſmans, multipliers, magnifiers of all degrees and ſizes, loadſtones cut in various forms, and great numbers of mathematical inſtruments; but theſe, as I was altogether ignorant of their uſes, I paſſed ſlightly over, till I came to a hand-bell, which having the appearance of no other than ſuch as I had ordinarily ſeen at a lady's tea-table, I ſhould have taken no notice of, but for a label prefixed to it, on which I found theſe words—

THE SYMPATHETICK BELL,

The leaſt tinkle of which not only ſets all the bells of the whole country, be it of ever ſo large extent, in motion, without the help of men to pluck the ropes, but alſo makes them play whatever changes the party is pleaſed to nominate.

Though I thought art could produce no greater wonder than this bell, yet I felt no ſtrong deſire of becoming maſter of it; but proceeded to examine what farther rarities this extraordinary cabinet would preſent. The next I took notice of was a phial, not much unlike thoſe which are commonly ſold in the ſhops with French Hungary-water: it had this inſcription—

SALTS OF MEDITATION,

Which, held cloſe to the noſtrils for the ſpace of three ſeconds and a half, corrects all vague and wandering thoughts, fixes the mind, and enables it to ponder juſtly on any ſubject that requires deliberation.

This beneficial ſecret I alſo rejected, through a mere point of conſcience, as thinking it would be a much better ſervice to mankind if in the poſſeſſion of the divines, lawyers, politicians, or phyſicians; eſpecially the two laſt mentioned, as it might prevent the one from engaging in any enterprize they have not abilities or courage to go through with; and the other from falling into thoſe groſs miſtakes they are frequently guilty of in relation to the caſe of the diſeaſed.

The next, and indeed the firſt thing that raiſed in me any covetous emotions, was the apparatus of a belt, but ſeemed no more than a collection of atoms gathered together in that form, and playing in the ſun-beams. I could not perſuade myſelf it was a real ſubſtance, till I took

I took it down, and then found it so light, that if I shut my eyes I knew not that I had any thing in my hand. The label annexed to it had these words—

THE BELT OF INVISIBILITY,

Which, fastened round the body, next the skin, no sooner becomes warm, than it renders the party invisible to all human eyes.

A little farther, on the same side of the wall, was placed a tablet, or pocket-book; which, on examining, I found was composed of a clear glassy substance, firm, yet thin as the bubbles which we sometimes see rise on the surface of the waters: it was malleable, and doubled in many foldings, so that, when shut, it seemed very small; but, when extended, was more long and broad than any sheet I ever saw of imperial paper. It's uses were decyphered in the following inscription—

THE WONDERFUL TABLET,

Which, in whatever place it is spread open, receives the impression of every word that is spoken, in as distinct a manner as if engraved; and can no way be expunged but by the breath of a virgin, of so pure an innocence as not to have even thought on the difference of sexes. After such a one, if such a one is to be found, has blown pretty hard upon it for the space of seven seconds and three quarters, she must wipe it gently with the first down under the left wing of an unfledged swan, plucked when the Moon is in three degrees of Virgo: this done, the Tablet will be entirely free from all former memorandums, and fit to take a new impression.

Note, That the virgin must exceed twelve years of age.

I was very much divided between these two: the Belt of Invisibility put a thousand rambles into my head, which promised discoveries highly flattering to the inquisitiveness of my humour; but then the Tablet, recording every thing I should hear spoken, which I confess my memory is too defective to retain, filled me with the most ardent desire of becoming master of so inestimable a treasure. In fine, I wanted both; so encroaching is the temper of mankind, that the grant of one favour generally paves the way for soliciting a second.

While I was in this dilemma, a stratagem occurred, which I hesitated not to put in practice, and found it answer to my wishes. I took both the Belt and Tablet in my hand; and having carefully locked the door of the cabinet, returned to the adept; he saw the Belt, which being long, hung over my wrist; but not perceiving I had the Tablet—'The choice you have made,' said he with a smile, 'confirms the truth of 'what I always believed, that curiosity 'is the most prevailing passion of the 'human mind.'

'However just that position may be,' replied I, 'that propensity is not strong 'enough in me, to make me able to decide between the wonderful Tablet, 'and the no less wonderful Belt: they 'appear to me of such equal estimation, 'that whenever I would fix on the one, 'the benefits of the other rise up in opposition to my choice; and I know not 'which of the two I should receive with 'most pleasure, or leave with the least 'regret. I have therefore brought both 'down to you, and intreat you will determine for me.'

I soon perceived he understood my meaning perfectly well; for, after a little pause—'When I made you the offer,' said he, 'of whatever you liked best 'among my collection of curiosities, I 'intended not that your acceptance of 'one thing should render you unhappy 'through the want of another: take, 'then, I beseech you, both the Belt and 'the Tablet; you shall leave neither of 'them behind you; nor do I wonder 'you should desire to unite them; they 'are, in a manner, concomitant; and 'the satisfaction that either of them 'would be able to procure, would be 'incompleat without the assistance of the 'other.'

Thus was I put in possession of a treasure, which I thought the more valuable, as I was pretty certain no other person, in this kingdom at least, enjoyed the like. After making proper acknowledgments to the obliging donor, I took my leave, and returned home with a heart overflowing with delight.

I was not long before I made trial of my Belt, and found the effects as the label had described. I also opened my Tablet, spoke, and saw my words immediately

mediately imprinted on it. I then procured some swans-down, according to direction, and entreated several young ladies to breathe upon it, one after another: but though I dare answer for their virtue, the favour they did me was in vain; the impression remained still indelible.

Indeed, when I began to consider maturely on the conditions prescribed in the label of the Tablet, I was sensible that it was not enough for a virgin to be perfectly innocent; she must also be equally ignorant, to be qualified for the performance of the task required: and not to have once thought on the difference of sexes, seemed a thing scarce possible, after six or seven years of age at most; and would have been as great a prodigy as either of those which had been bestowed upon me by the adept.

What would I not have given for such a one as Dorinda in Shakespeare's Inchanted Island! but such a hope being vain, I was extremely puzzled, and knew not what to do. At last, however, a lucky thought got me over the difficulty; it was this: I prevailed, for a small sum of money, with a very poor widow, who had several children, to let me have a girl of about three years old, to bring up and educate as I judged proper. I then committed my little purchase to the care of an elderly woman, whose discretion I had experienced. I communicated to her the whole of my design, and instructed her how to proceed in order to render it effectual.

The little creature was kept in an upper room, which had no window in it but a sky-light in the roof of the house; so could be witness of nothing that passed below. Her diet was thin, and very sparing. She was not permitted to sleep above half the time generally allowed for repose; and so no living thing but the old woman, who lay with her, gave her food, and did all that was necessary about her.

I frequently visited them in my invisibility, and was highly pleased and diverted with the diligence of my good old woman. She not only obeyed my orders with the utmost punctuality, but did many things of her own accord, which, though very requisite, I had not thought of. To prevent her young charge from falling into any of those distempers which the want of exercise sometimes occasions, she contrived to make a swing for her across the room; taught her to play at battledore and shuttlecock; to toss the ball, and catch it at the rebound; and such like childish gambols, which both delighted her mind, and kept her limbs in a continual motion.

This conduct, and this regimen, constantly observed, maintained my virgin's purity inviolate; as I did not fail to make an essay in a few days after she entered into her thirteenth year, and the success of my endeavours made me not regret the pains I had been at for such a length of time.

Now it runs in my head that some people will not credit one word of all this; for as there are many who believe too much, there are yet many more who will believe nothing at all but what their own shallow reason enables them to comprehend. Well, then, let them judge as they think fit; let them puzzle their wise noddles till they ache; I shall sit snug in my invisibility, while they lose half the pleasure, and, it may be, all the improvement, of my lucubrations.

But those who resolve to pursue me through the following pages with an ingenuous candour, I flatter myself will lose nothing by the chace. They will find me in various places, though not in so many as perhaps they may expect. They would in vain seek me at court balls, city feasts, the halls of justice, or meetings for elections; nor do I much haunt the opera or playhouses. In fine, I avoid all crowds, all mixed assemblies, except the masquerade and Venetian balls. I am a member of the established church; but, as I am not ashamed of appearing at divine worship, never put on my Invisible Belt when I go there. I revere regal authority, but seldom visit the cabinets of princes; because they are generally so filled with a thick fog, that the chrystalline texture of my Tablets could not receive what was said there so as to be read distinctly: nor do I much care to venture myself among their ministers of state, or any of their under-working tools; the floors of their rooms, in which their cabals are held, are composed of such slippery materials, that the least *faux pas* might endanger my invisibility, if not my neck. I should be more frequently with the military gentlemen,

tlemen, but that they are so apt to draw their swords without occasion, that while they think they are fencing in the air, they might chance to cut my belt asunder. And what a figure I should make, when one half of me was discovered, and the other was concealed! I will not mention the consequence such a sight might produce in some of them.

But it would be of little importance to the publick to be told where I am not, unless they also know where I am. Have patience, then, good people, and you shall be satisfied.

Sometimes I step in at one or other of those gaming-houses which are above law, by being under the protection of the great; but I seldom stay long in any of them, as I can see nothing there but what I have seen an hundred times before in those lesser assemblies of the same kind that have been so justly put down by authority.

Sometimes I peep into the closet of an antiquarian, where I find matter enough to excite both my pity and contempt. What greater instance can we have of the depravity of human nature, than in a rich curmudgeon, who, while he grumbles to allow his family necessary food, chearfully unties his bags, and pours out fifty, or, it may be, an hundred guineas, for the purchase of a bit of old copper; only because a fellow of more wit than honesty tells him it was found under the ruins of an ancient wall, where it had been buried ever since the time of Julius Cæsar, or Severus?

Sometimes, too, I amuse myself with turning over the collection of a virtuoso; where I am always filled with the utmost astonishment, at finding sums sufficient to endow an hospital lavished in the purchase of wings of butterflies, the shells of fishes, dried reptiles, the paw of some exotick animal, and such like baubles, neither pleasing in their prospect nor useful in their natures.

Sometimes I make one at the levee of a rich heir, just arrived from his travels to the possession of an overgrown estate; where I cannot help trembling for the future fate of the poor youth, on seeing him besieged with a crowd of marriage-brokers, pleasure-brokers, exchange-brokers, lawyers, gamesters, French taylors, Dresden milliners, petitioning harlots, congratulating poets; in fine, with sharpers, flatterers, and sycophants, of every kind.

Sometimes I mingle in the route of a woman of quality; see who wins, who loses, at play; and in what manner ladies are frequently obliged to pay their debts of honour.

When I have nothing better to employ my time, I loiter away some hours in St. James's Park, Kensington Gardens; or at Vauxhall, Ranelagh, and Mary-le-bon; and am often witness of some scenes exciting present mirth and future reflection.

But my chief delight is in the drawing-room of some celebrated toasts, whence I often steal into their bed-chambers.—But don't be frighted, ladies; I never carry my inspections farther than the *ruelle*.

These are some few particulars of the tour I have made. To give the whole detail would be too tedious. I shall therefore only say that, wherever I am found, I shall always be found a lover of morality; and no enemy to religion, or any of it's worthy professors, of what sect or denomination soever.

And now, reader, having let thee into the secret of my history, as far as it is convenient for me to reveal, I shall leave thee to enjoy the advantage of those discoveries my invisibility enabled me to make.

CHAP. II.

CONTAINS SOME PREMISES VERY NECESSARY TO BE OBSERVED BY EVERY READER; AND ALSO AN ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR'S FIRST INVISIBLE VISIT.

IT was in the beginning of that season of the year which affords most food for an enquiring mind, that I had got all things in order to sally forth on my invisible progressions. The august representatives of the whole body of the people were just ready to assemble; the expounders of the Law were hurrying to Westminster Hall, and those of the Gospel to pay their compliments at St. James's. The ships of war were mostly moored; and their gallant commanders had quitted the rough, athletick toil, for the soft charms of ease and luxury. The land-heroes, who, having no em-

ployment

ployment for their swords, had passed their days in rural sports, now hunted after a different sort of game, at the theatres and masquerades. Frequent consultations were held at the toilets of the ladies, on ways and means to outshine each other in the circle. Former amours were now revived, and even new ones every day commenced. Madam Intelligence, with her thousand and ten thousand emissaries, all loaded with reports, some true, some false, flew swiftly through each quarter of this great metropolis; and had every pore of every human body been an ear, they all might have been fully gratified.

Besides the gratification of a darling passion, I had another, and much more justifiable reason, for the value I set upon the legacy of my departed friend; which is this: I have it in my power to pluck off the mask of hypocrisy from the seeming saint; to expose vice and folly in all their various modes and attitudes; to strip a bad action of all the specious pretences made to conceal or palliate it, and shew it in it's native uglineſs. At the same time, I have also the means to rescue injured innocence from the cruel attacks begun by envy and scandal, and propagated by prejudice and ill-nature. In fine, I am enabled, by this precious gift, to set both things and persons in their proper colours; and not in such as, either through malice or partial favour, they are frequently made to appear.

I should be sorry, however, if any thing I have said should give the reader occasion to imagine I am going to present him with a book of scandal: no; the secrets of families, and characters of persons, shall be always sacred with me. I shall give no man the opportunity of indulging a malicious pleasure of laughing at his neighbour's faults. My aim, in this work, is not to ridicule, but reform. I would touch the hearts, not call a blush upon the face. And, as few people have errors so peculiar to themselves, as there are not many guilty of the like, if the offender keeps his own counsel, he may very well pass undistinguished among the crowd of others equally culpable.

Verramond is justly accounted one of the most accomplished gentlemen of the present age. The gracefulness of his person, the engaging manner of his conversation, his fine address, and uncommon capacity, make his company desired by all the young and gay part of the world; as his great learning, and perfect knowledge of men and things, render him the oracle of the more grave and serious. I had frequently the honour of meeting him at several places where I visited, and found nothing in him which could in the least contradict those high ideas fame had given me of him.

It was therefore natural for me to take the advantage of my gift of invisibility, in order to view this great person in his most retired moments; I mean, when he was alone, and divested of all those modes and ceremonies which often disguise the real man, and shew him to the publick far different from what he is.

Accordingly, the first visit I made in my Belt was at his house. I slipped in as soon as I saw the door opened, went up stairs, and passed through several rooms, till I came to that where he was sitting. I found him with a book in his hand, on which he seemed very intent. I doubted not but it was a treatise of philosophy, or some other piece of learning or wit, suitable to the capacity of so great a genius: but how much was I surprized, when, looking over his shoulder, I perceived it was Hoyle's Method of Playing the Game of Whist! He appeared more than ordinarily taken up with one page, for he read it over three or four times; then started up from his chair, and throwing the book from him in a rage—'Curse on this stuff!' cried he; 'it is good for nothing but to 'teach a man how to undo himself 'with more art.' After walking for some minutes backwards and forwards in the room with a disordered motion, he flung himself into his chair, and fell into a profound reverie; in which I know not how long he might have continued, if he had not been rouzed from it by the approach of a person who I presently found was his steward.

The business on which this man came into the room was no way pleasing to Verramond; but because I would avoid the troublesome repetitions of 'said he,' and 'replied he,' and 'resumed the 'other,' and such-like introductions to every speech, I shall present all those dialogues which are proper to be communicated to the publick, in the same manner as in the printed copies of theatrical performances.

Steward. My lord, the several tradesmen

men whom your lordſhip ordered to come this morning are below, and wait your lordſhip's commands.

Verramond. I have no commands for them at all; ſo ſend them away.

Steward. Shall I bid them attend your lordſhip to-morrow?

Verramond. Aye, to-morrow ſix months, if you will; for I ſhall ſcarce have any buſineſs with them before.

Steward. My lord, I told them they ſhould all be paid off this morning. What excuſe can I make to them for ſuch a diſappointment?

Verramond. E'en what you will. If you can invent nothing better, you may tell them that you lyed when you made that promiſe in my name.

Steward. Your lordſhip knows it was by your own order I made that promiſe; and that you ſent me into the city yeſterday for money, which I doubted not but was to make good what I had told them. If your lordſhip pleaſes to conſider, it is now a long time ſince they brought in their bills, and they have had a great deal of patience.

Verramond. Rot their patience! Do you think to make a merit to me of their patience? Go, I ſay; ſend them away, and let me hear no more of them.

The tone in which Verramond uttered theſe words was ſo auſtere, that the honeſt domeſtick had not courage to reply, but left the room immediately; probably to receive no ſofter treatment below, from thoſe he was compelled to diſappoint, than he had juſt met with above, for attempting to intercede in their behalf.

Lord Macro was preſently after introduced. The late ſullenneſs of Verramond ſeemed now entirely diſſipated. Whatever was in his heart, his countenance wore only ſmiles; and he ran to receive him with open arms, and all the teſtimonies of the moſt perfect ſatisfaction: and yet, as I ſoon found by the diſcourſe they had together, this very Macro, the night before, had won of him at play fifteen hundred pounds, which was the ſum he had ſet apart for the payment of his creditors. Their converſation turning wholly upon gaming, a ſubject neither entertaining nor improving, I ſhall give my readers no more than a bare ſpecimen of it.

Lord Macro. My dear Verramond, I could not be eaſy till I ſaw you this morning: I thought you left the company ſomewhat abruptly laſt night, and was afraid your ill luck had given you ſome chagrin.

Verramond. Not in the leaſt, my dear Macro. I never think any thing loſt that a friend gains. But I remembered that I had ſome letters to write; otherwiſe ſhould have ſtaid and truſted Fortune with a brace or two of hundreds farther.

Lord Macro. As it is an honour to get the better of your lordſhip in any thing, ſo it will be no diſgrace to be overcome by a perſon of ſuch ſuperior abilities; therefore, I am ready to give you your revenge when you think fit.

Verramond. Nay, as for that, Macro, it muſt be confeſſed you know the game better than I.

Here followed a long ſucceſſion of mutual compliments on each other's ſkill in play; of which growing heartily tired, I was beginning to think of leaving the place; and ſhould have done ſo, if the appearance of the ſteward a ſecond time had not made me expect ſome change in the ſcene. His errand, and the ſucceſs it met with, will not, perhaps, appear ſo extraordinary to thoſe acquainted with the modiſh way of thinking, as it then did to me.

Steward. Farmer Hobſon is below, my lord. The poor man has rode hard all night, on purpoſe to reach town this morning, and lay his miſerable condition before your lordſhip.

Verramond. Piſh! what have I to do with his condition?

Steward. He ſays, my lord, that his crop proved ſo bad laſt year, that he had ſcarce wherewith to ſtock the ground; that Mr. Hardmeat, your lordſhip's ſteward in the country, is very ſenſible of his misfortunes; yet, though there are but five quarters due, threatens to turn him out of the farm next week. He therefore humbly hopes your lordſhip will take compaſſion on him, as he has ſix ſmall children, and his wife now lying in of the ſeventh.

Verramond. What buſineſs have ſuch fellows to get children? Does he expect my rent ſhall go for the maintenance of his brats?

Steward. He begs your lordſhip to

conſider that, for theſe eleven years he has rented the farm, he has always paid your lordſhip honeſtly; and does not doubt, through Providence, but to do ſo ſtill, if your lordſhip is pleaſed to have patience till next harveſt is over, and not ruin him at once.

Verramond. Let me hear no more of this ſtuff! I leave all to Mr. Hardmeat: he knows what he has to do; and I ſhall give myſelf no trouble about it.

The ſteward, with whoſe good-nature I was infinitely charmed, had his mouth open to urge ſomething farther in behalf of the diſtreſſed farmer, but was prevented by a ſervant that inſtant coming in, and preſenting a letter to Verramond; who then bid him go down, and tell the unhappy ſupplicant he might return home, for there was no anſwer to be given to his complaint.

Verramond would not open the letter he had juſt received till he knew who ſent it; but, on his footman's informing him it came from Mr. Gamble, he haſtily broke the ſeal, and found the contents as follows—

'MY EVER-HONOURED LORD,

'I Happened to be engaged laſt night 'at a houſe where the conſtable, 'with his poſſe, made a forcible en- 'trance, demoliſhed our tables, put 'moſt of the company to flight, and 'ſeized the reſt. I was unluckily one 'of the laſt claſs; and committed to 'durance vile, as Hudibras ſays, as 'your lordſhip will perceive by the 'date hereof.

'A perſon here has undertaken, for a 'fee of five guineas, to procure my im- 'mediate diſcharge; and I do not 'doubt, by the method he propoſes, but 'he is able to do it. I am not, how- 'ever, at preſent, maſter of as many 'ſhillings: nor can any way raiſe the 'money he demands; having been 'obliged, the day before this accident 'befel me, to leave my watch, linen, 'and beſt apparel, at Mr. Grub's, in 'truſt for a ſmall ſum required of me 'by the pariſh-officers, on account of a 'baſtard child, which a wench of the 'town has done me the honour to ſwear 'I am the father of.

'All my hopes, therefore, of get- 'ting out of limbo, are in your lord- 'ſhip's generoſity; which if you vouch- 'ſafe to grant me this one more proof 'of, I ſhall, if poſſible, be more than 'ever, with the moſt profound duty, 'dear patron, your devoted vaſſal,

'RICHARD GAMBLE.

'BRIDEWELL.

'P. S. I had forgot to acquaint 'your lordſhip, that I ſhall have need 'of more than the above-mentioned 'ſum, for diſcharging the fees of this 'curſed hole; without the payment 'of which I cannot be releaſed.'

Verramond heſitated not a moment to comply with this requeſt, nor even whether he ſhould exceed what was deſired of him: he drew out his purſe, put ten guineas into the footman's hands, and ordered him to run directly to Bridewell. 'Carry that money to 'Mr. Gamble, with his compliments; 'and let him know he ſhould be glad 'to ſee him, as ſoon as he has recovered 'his liberty.'

Who will ſay now that Verramond is not liberal? But, alas! how ill-placed an act of benevolence was this? Was it not rather caprice than true charity, which induced him to beſtow this money to ſave a common ſharper from the puniſhment he juſtly merited; yet, at the ſame time, refuſe to an honeſt, induſtrious tenant, a ſmall reſpite of payment, though to preſerve him and his poor family from deſtruction? But Gamble was a neceſſary perſon at a gaming-table; he was of importance to his pleaſure that way: and the farmer being only regarded for the rent he paid, when deficient in that, muſt be thrown out like a piece of uſeleſs lumber, and his place occupied by ſome one who promiſed to be of greater utility.

Yet do I not think ſuch a conduct is always to be aſcribed to the fault of nature. Verramond has certainly the ſeeds of virtue and honour in his ſoul; but they are ſuffocated and choaked up by his immoderate love of play. Strange is it, that a man, capable of thinking ſo juſtly, will not be at the pains of thinking at all, but ſuffer himſelf to be ſwayed, by a darling propenſity, to actions which, if he once reflected upon, he would be ſo far from perpetrating, that he would deſpiſe the very temptation of being guilty of!

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

PRESENTS THE READER WITH SOME PASSAGES WHICH CANNOT FAIL OF ENTERTAINING THOSE NOT INTERESTED IN THEM, AND MAY BE OF SERVICE TO THOSE WHO ARE.

AMONG the numerous troops of Britiſh toaſts, there are few who ſhine with more diſtinguiſhed luſtre, in all publick places, than the beautiful Marcella. Beſides an exact ſymmetry of features, a moſt delicate complexion, and a fine-turned ſhape, there is ſomething peculiarly enchanting in her air and mien. I never ſee her, without being reminded of the celebrated deſcription Milton gives of Eve in her ſtate of innocence—

'Grace was in all her ſteps, heav'n in her
'eye,
'In ev'ry geſture dignity and love.'

She was married very young to Celadon; and though neither of their hearts had been conſulted in the match, yet they had the reputation of living well together. They behaved to each other with the greateſt complaiſance in publick; and if any cauſe of diſcontent ever happened between them, both had the diſcretion to keep it extremely private.

I could not, therefore, expect to make any extraordinary diſcoveries in this family. The door, however, happening to be open one day as I paſſed by, I ſtepped in without any previous deſign; and, now I did ſo, was rather excited by curioſity of ſeeing ſome fine pictures, which I had been told were in the houſe, than of prying into the behaviour of the owners.

But it frequently falls out, that what we leaſt ſeek we moſt eaſily find; and thoſe things we imagine fartheſt from us, are in effect the neareſt. In paſſing through the ſeveral rooms in this houſe, I ſaw Marcella writing in her cloſet; and never was I ſo much amazed as now, to find ſo fair a form harbour a mind capable of dictating theſe lines—

'TO FILLAMOUR.

'DEAREST OF YOUR SEX,

'THANKS to the powers of love
'and liberty, that hated bar to
'all my happineſs is removed for a
'ſhort time! Celadon is gone upon a
'party of pleaſure, and this night is
'entirely my own. If, therefore, no
'more agreeable engagement detains
'you, come here between the hours of
'twelve and one. I ſhall take care to
'ſend all the family to bed, except the
'faithful Rachel; who ſhall attend to
'admit you, on your giving a gentle
'rap againſt the ſhutter of the parlour-
'window next the door. Let me know
'by the bearer whether I may expect
'you; though it is a bleſſing I ſcarce
'doubt of, if any of that affection be
'ſincere, as you have often vowed to
'the believing and paſſionate

'MARCELLA.'

Having ſealed this billet, ſhe called her chambermaid, and ordered her to ſend it, as directed, by a truſty porter; then threw herſelf upon a couch, took the novel of Sylvia and Philander, read a little in it, ſighed, and ſeemed all diſſolved in the moſt tender languiſhment; when her emiſſary returned, and brought this anſwer to her ſummons—

'TO THE CHARMING MARCELLA.

'DEAR ANGEL,

'I Am at preſent ſurrounded with a
'great deal of company, and have
'no opportunity to thank as I would
'the kindneſs of yours. I can only
'ſay, that nothing ſhall keep me from
'flying to my adorable Marcella at the
'appointed hour: till then, adieu. Be
'aſſured that I am always, with the
'utmoſt ardency, your devoted vaſſal,

'FILLAMOUR.'

The fair libertine now expreſſed the higheſt ſatisfaction, and immediately fell into diſcourſe with her confidante, Rachel, concerning the manner in which this nocturnal gueſt ſhould be concealed, and how neither his entrance nor his exit be diſcovered, or even ſuſpected, by any of the family.

I had no curioſity to know any thing farther of this affair, ſo took the firſt opportunity of leaving the houſe; extremely troubled in my mind that a woman, whoſe beauty had ſo much attracted my reſpect, ſhould prove herſelf ſo unworthy of it by her conduct.

'With what boldneſs,' ſaid I within myſelf, 'does the lovely wanton run 'headlong to her ruin; fearleſs of 'guilt, and of the puniſhment which, 'one time or other, muſt be the un-'failing conſequence!

"As if that faultleſs form could act no "crime,
"But Heaven, on looking on it, muſt for-"give!"

I went home, and got my Tablets cleared from the impure contents of the above-recited epiſtles. I wiſhed, indeed, to think no more of this tranſaction; and, to ſecond my endeavours that way, towards evening ſallied out again, equipped in my Inviſible Belt, like a true knight-errant, in ſearch of ſuch adventures as chance ſhould preſent me with.

I went to the houſe of an elderly lady, with whom I formerly had been acquainted. She was at that time looked upon as a pattern of piety and prudence: fathers, huſbands, brothers, all who had any concern for the virtue and reputation of the female part of their family, recommended her example for their imitation; but, at laſt, after a long ſeries of the moſt laudable and becoming actions, ſhe at once degenerated into the very reverſe of what ſhe had been; fell into all the faſhionable follies of the times, at an age when others are beginning to grow weary of them, and commenced a coquette at fifty-five.

I had been told ſuch things, in relation to her conduct, as ſeemed to me too unaccountable to be believed; and was extremely ſorry to find, in the viſit I now made her, all thoſe reports confirmed by the teſtimony of my own ſenſes.

This lady, whom I ſhall diſtinguiſh by the name of Lamia, ſets an high value upon herſelf for her great ſkill at picquet. She challenged Grizelda, another antiquated belle, who alſo pretends to be an adept in that ſcience, to play with her for an hundred guineas the firſt four games in ſix. The other loved money; and, not doubting ſhe ſhould come off conqueror, readily embraced the propoſal; and the night agreed upon between them for the deciſion of this event, happened to be that in which I went.

Grizelda came to the door juſt as I did; ſo I ſlipped in behind, and followed her up ſtairs; where ſhe was received by Lamia with the greateſt politeneſs and ſhew of affection. The card-table was called for, and the ladies ſat oppoſite to each other. I placed myſelf at the end of the table, that, being between them, I might have the better opportunity of obſerving what both did. They were now very ſerious, and attentive to the buſineſs they were upon: played, or rather cheated, each other with great caution; for I ſoon perceived that it was in this latter part of the art of gaming that the excellence of either chiefly conſiſted.

For a time, each was ſo taken up with her own *petites fourberies*, as not to have leiſure to obſerve thoſe practiſed by her adverſary. At laſt, however, Lamia having re-taken in a card ſhe had laid out, Grizelda perceived it, and accuſed her of the change. Rage and diſdain, on finding herſelf detected, made the cheeks of the other glow with a deeper ſcarlet than the carmine had given them; and her eyes, even in deſpight of age, ſparkle with fires which love and youth had never power to fill them with. The other was no leſs enflamed.—But their reſentment will beſt be ſhewn in the expreſſions made uſe of by themſelves.

Lamia. I am ſurprized you can ſuſpect me guilty of ſo mean a thing as cheating at cards. Sure you cannot think I value the triſle we are playing for! What is an hundred guineas to me? I regard an hundred no more than a pinch of ſnuff.

Grizelda. Madam, I value an hundred guineas as little as yourſelf; but I hate to be impoſed upon.

Lamia. What do you mean, Madam? Do you ſay I have impoſed upon you?

Grizelda. I ſay you would have done it, Madam, if my eyes had not been quicker than your hands.

Lamia. Madam, I ſcorn your words! and if you were not in my houſe, ſhould tell you that you lyed.

Grizelda. And if it were not in reſpect to your age, Madam, I ſhould tell you that you were a baſe woman, and had invited me hither only to cheat me of my money.

Lamia. My age!—good lack, my age!—I leave the world to judge which of us two looks the oldeſt. I beg, Madam, you will not deceive yourſelf. It is not your long falſe locks, hanging dangling on each ſide your face, that hide the wrinkles of it.

Grizelda,

Grizelda. I wear no plumpers, Madam! Do you not remember, when one of yours dropped out of your mouth at Lady Betty's drawing-room, how all the company were frighted at you, and cried out you had loſt half your face?

I ſtarted on hearing this reproach of Grizelda, being, at that time, utterly unacquainted with the meaning of it; but, as it is highly probable that a great many of my readers may be as ignorant in this point as myſelf then was, I ſhall explain it, by giving a direction of the uſe and preparation of plumpers, as I have ſince received it from the waiting-maid of a woman of condition.

A SURE WAY TO HELP LANK CHEEKS.

TAKE a piece of the fineſt, cleaneſt ſponge you can get. Cut out of it two ſmall bolſters, and place them between your cheeks and teeth, if you have any; if not, the gums will ſerve to keep them up. On taking them out of your mouth, going to bed, throw them into a tea-cup of roſe or orange-flower water, and let them ſoak all night: this will not only cleanſe them from whatever impurites they may have happened to have received, but will alſo give a delectable flavour to the breath.—*Probatum eſt.*

Theſe ladies purſued their mutual altercations for a conſiderable time, in a faſhion which the intelligent reader may eaſily conceive by the ſample I have given. I ſhall therefore only ſay that, after having charged each other with all the vices and foibles that either of them could think of, they at laſt quarrelled themſelves into a reconciliation, begged each other's pardon, and went to play a ſecond time: then fell out again; and provocations on both ſides being renewed, and reproaches ſtill growing more piquant, Lamia tore the cards, and threw them into the fire. Grizelda called for her chair, and left the houſe in a great fury. I gladly followed her out, being heartily ſick of what I had ſeen between theſe fair, or rather unfair antagoniſts; but had no opportunity of getting away before, as the door had never once been opened.

It was now near two hours paſt midnight; and I found more ſatisfaction in the thoughts of going to my repoſe, than in thoſe diſcoveries my inviſibility had entertained me with. I was making all the ſpeed I could to my apartment for that purpoſe, but fate decreed it otherwiſe, and had contrived an accident which renewed all my former curioſity. In my way home I paſſed through the ſtreet where Marcella lived; and the ſight of her houſe bringing freſh into my mind what the morning had preſented, I could not keep myſelf from ſtopping ſhort, to make reflections on the conduct of that fair fallen angel. 'She is doubtleſs by this time in the arms of her beloved Fillamour,' ſaid I to myſelf; 'and, while revelling in the pleaſures of 'a looſe inclination, forfeits all ſenſe of 'honour, duty, fame, and even what 'is owing to the merit of thoſe charms 'nature has endowed her with; and 'oh! ſtrange paradox of a vicious flame! 'renders herſelf cheap and contemptible 'in the eyes of the very man whoſe 'eſteem ſhe moſt wiſhes to preſerve!'

How long I ſhould have remained in this reverie I know not, but I was rouzed from it by the ſudden appearance of Celadon, who, with a light carried before him, came haſtily down the ſtreet, and knocked at his own door. To ſee him return at a time when I knew he was ſo little expected, made me not doubt but that he had received ſome information of the injury done him, and came in order to detect and revenge himſelf on the guilty pair. I trembled for poor Marcella; but what grounds I had to do ſo, as well as the event of this night's tranſaction, muſt be left to the next chapter.

CHAP. IV.

CONCLUDES AN ADVENTURE OF A VERY SINGULAR NATURE IN IT'S CONSEQUENCES.

THE anxiety I was under to know what would become of poor Marcella, immediately determined me to follow her huſband into the houſe. A man-ſervant not having obeyed his lady's commands in going to bed, having ſomething or other wherewith to employ himſelf in his own room, on hearing ſomebody at the door, looked through the window, and perceiving it was his maſter, flew down ſtairs, and gave him entrance on the firſt knock.

Rachel,

Rachel, who had been poſted centinel in a back-parlour, in order to watch the break of day, and conduct Fillamour out of the houſe before any of the family were ſtirring, now came running out on hearing the ſtreet-door opened; but, ſcarce could an apparition have ſpread a greater terror through her whole frame than did the ſight of Celadon at this juncture.

Rachel. Lord, Sir, who could have thought your honour would have come home to-night?

Celadon. I did not deſign it, indeed; but, is it ſo ſtrange a thing that a man ſhould change his mind?

In ſpeaking this he was paſſing on, but ſhe threw herſelf between him and the foot of the ſtairs, and catching faſt hold of the ſleeve of his coat, prevented him from going up, with theſe words:

Rachel. Oh, dear Sir! I beg you will not diſturb my lady; ſhe is gone to bed very much diſcompoſed: pray be ſo good as to ſtep into the parlour; there is a good fire, and I will go and ſee if ſhe is awake, and tell her you are here.

Celadon. My wife ill! What is the matter with her?

Rachel. I do not know, Sir, but ſhe was ſeized with a ſort of a—— I can't tell the name of it, indeed not I; but I believe it was ſomething like a fit; and ſo, Sir, ſhe went to bed; but I will go and let her know you are come.

Celadon. No, no, ſhe may be aſleep, and it would be a pity to wake her; therefore I'll take your advice, Mrs. Rachel, and ſit a little in the parlour.—Tom, do you go to bed, I ſhall not want any thing to-night.

The fellow did as he was commanded; and I could eaſily perceive, by Rachel's countenance, that ſhe was upon the wing to be gone too, impatient, I ſuppoſe, to apprize Marcella of what had happened, and aſſiſt her in contriving ſome means for concealing her gallant: but whatever her thoughts were, Celadon had that moment got ſomething in his head which effectually prevented any ſchemes ſhe might otherwiſe have laid for ſecuring the honour of her lady. Tom was no ſooner gone than Celadon took hold of both her hands, and drew her gently into the parlour, with theſe words—

Celadon. Come, Mrs. Rachel, if I am ſo complaiſant to my wife's diſorder as to refrain going to bed to her, I think I may very well be allowed the pleaſure of your company, by way of conſolation.

Rachel. Oh, dear Sir! what pleaſure can you find in the company of ſuch a one as I?

Celadon. As much as I can wiſh. Come, ſit down; nay, you ſhall ſit by me; now we are alone, there is no occaſion for all this diſtance between us. I have a great deal to ſay to you; nothing, ſure, was ever ſo lucky as my coming home to-night! I like you, I love you, and have longed, almoſt ever ſince you came into the family, for an opportunity to tell you ſo.

Rachel. Lord, Sir, how ſtrangely you talk to one! I wiſh your honour would let me go up ſtairs, to ſee how my lady does.

Celadon. No, indeed, I ſhall not ſuffer you to run away, and leave me alone here; if my wife wants any thing ſhe will ring her bell. Come, none of this coyneſs; let me tell you, child, too much reſerve in private with a man who loves you, and has it in his power to make your fortune, is as unbecoming as too much familiarity would be in publick. You may depend upon it, whatever favours you beſtow on me ſhall be returned with others no leſs agreeable to yourſelf. I know very well how a perſon of my ſtation ought to behave towards one of yours in theſe caſes, and ſhall act accordingly.

Rachel made no reply to all this, but hung down her head, and looked extremely ſilly. Celadon, interpreting her ſilence as a half conſent to his deſires, began now to add kiſſes and embraces to his ſolicitations: the warmth with which he preſſed her, ſoon wrought the effect it was intended for; though I eaſily perceived the moſt prevailing argument he made uſe of was taking out his purſe, and pouring twenty guineas into her lap. The tranſport which ſparkled in the eyes of this mercenary creature, on beholding the glittering bait, put me immediately in mind of what Mr. Dryden makes Jupiter ſay in his play of Amphytrion—

'When I made
'This gold, I made a greater god than Jove,
'And gave my own omnipotence away.'

But it is little to be wondered at that a girl, ſuch as this Rachel, ſhould fall proſtrate before that reigning idol of th worlde

world, who has for it's votaries not only men of the greateſt parts and abilities, but alſo too many among thoſe who make the higheſt profeſſions of honour, probity, and virtue; nay, I am ſorry to ſay, of religion: daily experience, however, and a very ſmall obſervation of the corruption of the preſent age, evinces this melancholy truth.

So finding a ſcene was likely to enſue, which it was not agreeable to my inclination, or any way proper that I ſhould be witneſs of, I withdrew into an adjacent parlour, where ſolitude, darkneſs, and the profound ſilence of every thing about me, contributed to promote the moſt ſolemn meditations. I reflected on the extreme folly, as well as wickedneſs, of giving way to an inordinate gratification of the ſenſes, and the certain danger, and almoſt certain infamy, which attends the doing ſo. On this occaſion ſeveral paſſages and accidents relating to many of my acquaintance occurred freſh to my mind; and when I remembered how ſome, who had been endowed by Heaven and Fortune with every requiſite, excepting virtue, to compleat their happineſs, yet by the want of that alone had expoſed themſelves to a condition the moſt abject and contemptible to which a reaſonable being can poſſibly be reduced, I could not forbear crying out with the inimitable Cowley—

'All this world's noiſe appears to me
'But as a dull, ill-acted comedy.'

While I was thus ruminating, and wondering within myſelf what would be the conſequence of this night's tranſaction, I perceived through the crevices of the window-ſhutters, that the day began to break, and preſently after heard a certain ruſtling upon the ſtairs: it was occaſioned by Marcella and Fillamour, who, on finding Rachel did not come up as they expected, and the light was pretty far advancing, were creeping ſoftly down. The noiſe Marcella made in unfaſtening the chain that went acroſs the ſtreet-door, waked Celadon and Rachel, who it ſeems had both fallen aſleep: the former, on hearing the noiſe, was running out of the parlour, to ſee what was the matter; but Rachel prevented him, by ſaying, ſhe was ſure it was only one of the footmen, who went out more early than ordinary to the ſtable. This excuſe might have ſolved all, if Marcella herſelf had not unluckily been her own betrayer. That lady, incenſed beyond meaſure, puſhed open the door of the room where Rachel was ordered to attend, beginning to upbraid before ſhe ſaw her.

Marcella. So, minx, you have ſerved me finely; it is almoſt broad day. I have knocked the heel of my ſhoe almoſt off, for I would not ring for fear of alarming the family. I ſuppoſe you have been aſleep: this it is to place any dependance on ſervants.

Celadon, on hearing his wife's voice before ſhe entered, had ſtepped behind a ſcreen, either ſuſpecting ſomething of the truth, or becauſe he was unwilling to be ſurprized with Rachel at that hour; and Rachel, doubly confounded between her lady's reproaches and the knowledge who was witneſs of them, that ſhe was utterly unable to ſpeak one word for ſome time, but ſhook her head, winked, and pointed to the ſcreen, thinking, by thoſe ſignificant geſtures, to prevent Marcella from ſaying any thing farther; till finding ſhe was again opening her mouth, ſhe recovered herſelf enough to cry out—

Rachel. Lord, Madam, do not ſtand talking here; you will certainly get cold, and make yourſelf worſe; conſider you are half naked; pray go to bed again.

Marcella. What does the wench mean? but I ſuppoſe you have been at the ratifia bottle, and ſtupified yourſelf, according to cuſtom. Well, 'tis your own loſs; for I dare ſwear Fillamour would have given you no leſs a preſent than five guineas for your diligence, if you had come up as you ought to have done: 'tis now quite light in the ſtreet, and a thouſand to one but ſome of the neighbours may have ſeen him go out.

Celadon coming forward. So, Madam, I find you have been diverting yourſelf, and Fillamour is the man to whom I am obliged for giving you conſolation in my abſence.

That perſon muſt know very little of nature, who does not eaſily conceive what Marcella felt in ſo ſhocking a juncture; ſurprize, ſhame, and vexation for having thus fooliſhly expoſed her guilt, quite overwhelmed her heart; ſhe gave a great ſhriek, and ſunk, half-fainting, into a chair. Rachel ran to her aſſiſtance, and at the ſame time willing to retrieve,

retrieve, if poſſible, told Celadon that he muſt not take any notice of her lady's words; that ſhe went very ill to bed; that ſhe was delirious, and knew not what ſhe ſaid. This, however, had no effect upon him; he was too well convinced of the injury that had been done him, and loaded his tranſgreſſing wife with every invective that a huſband, in his circumſtances, could invent.

But certainly it is impoſſible for any woman to behave with greater courage and reſolution than Marcella now did; ſhe preſently regained her ſenſes, and after having made Rachel leave the room, a moment's reflection ſerved her to reply to the reproaches made her by her huſband, in theſe terms—

Marcella. Well, Sir, I confeſs appearances are againſt me, nor do I wonder at, nor will reſent the aſperity of your treatment. Though guilty of no real crime, my vanity has led me into a folly which merits all you have ſaid to me. I have not, in fact, diſhonoured either myſelf or you, and my behaviour this night has only mortified the pride and arrogance of a man who would have rivalled you in my eſteem and affection.

Celadon. Excellent, i'faith—beyond imagination. I have been told, indeed, that a woman need but look down upon her apron-ſtring to find an excuſe for the moſt enormous crime ſhe can be guilty of; but this of yours is ſuch a one, as cannot fail of giving a good deal of diverſion in a court of judicature; though I ſcarce think it will ſave either Fillamour's eſtate from the penalty the law inflicts on an attempt to baſtardize an honourable family, or his throat from the juſtice of my ſword.

The boldneſs of Marcella was not to be awed by theſe menaces; ſhe found he had too much underſtanding to be impoſed upon by the ſhallow artifice ſhe had made uſe of; that he now heartily diſpiſed her, and that ſhe had no longer any meaſures to preſerve with him: therefore, collecting all the courage ſhe was miſtreſs of, ſhe threw her eyes upon him with a contempt equal to that which he looked upon her, and made him this reply—

Marcella. 'Tis mighty well, Sir; you are at your liberty to make uſe of all the weapons in your power for revenge; but I would have you to remember, that whether Fillamour cuts your throat, or you cut his, and are hanged for it, the matter will be of little importance to me; and as for a court of judicature, I believe you will find it very difficult to make good any accuſations you may exhibit againſt me there: no one ever ſaw me in bed with Fillamour, much leſs can prove any criminal converſation between us, ſo that the ridicule would turn wholly upon yourſelf; and perhaps provoke me, as I have had no child by you, to bring in a bill of impotency, in which caſe I ſhould have all my fortune returned; a thing your preſent circumſtances would not very well bear, as ſome part of your eſtate is already mortgaged.

To all this Celadon was able to make no other reply, than that he ſtood amazed at her audacity; that he found ſhe was abandoned to all ſenſe of ſhame; that ſhe was a monſter of impudence, and ſuch like: at which ſhe ſeemed not in the leaſt moved, but proceeded to reaſon with him in the ſame determined faſhion ſhe had begun.

Marcella. Look you, Celadon, all the fury you can be poſſeſſed of will remedy nothing: let us argue like rational creatures; whatever opinion we may have of each other, the only way to preſerve either of our characters, is to live well together in the eyes of the world. I tell you that I am innocent, and it is for your eaſe and intereſt, as well as mine, that you ſhould believe I am ſo; which if you do, I faithfully promiſe to regulate my conduct in ſuch a manner as to bring no diſreputation on myſelf, or diſhonour to you; but if you fly into extremes, you will oblige me to do the ſame; and, what but our mutual infamy and deſtruction can be the end of ſuch a conteſt? I leave you to conſider on what I have ſaid, and wait your cooler moments for an anſwer.

With theſe words ſhe went haſtily out of the room. Celadon offered not to detain her, but continued walking backwards and forwards, teſtifying, by ſeveral diſordered geſtures, the inward agitations of his mind. After ſome moments paſſed in the ſilent expreſſions of his rage, he called to the ſervants, moſt of whom were now ſtirring, to get a bed prepared for him in another chamber; but I am of opinion, that when he retired thither, it was leſs to ſleep than to reflect how it would beſt become him to behave under the

the ſhocking circumſtance he was now involved in.

Finding no farther diſcoveries were likely to be made at this time, I left the houſe on the firſt opening of the ſtreet-door, and returned home; where, fatigued as I was for want of reſt, the aſtoniſhment I was in at the behaviour of Marcella would not ſuffer the leaſt ſlumber to cloſe my eyes.

For ſome days I was extremely impatient to know the reſult of this affair; but, hearing no talk of it about town, began to conclude that the wife's arguments had prevailed, and the huſband had ſubmitted his reſentment to his convenience. I ſoon found I was not deceived in my conjectures, for in leſs than a week I ſaw Celadon and Marcella taking the air together in their own coach, with the ſame appearance of ſerenity in both their countenances, as if nothing of the adventure I have been relating had ever happened.

CHAP. V.

SHEWS, THAT THOUGH A REMISSNESS OF CARE IN THE BRINGING UP OF CHILDREN, CAN SCARCE FAIL OF BEING ATTENDED WITH VERY BAD CONSEQUENCES; YET, THAT AN OVER EXACT CIRCUMSPECTION IN MINUTE THINGS, MAY SOMETIMES PROVE EQUALLY PERNICIOUS TO THEIR FUTURE WELFARE.

VARIOUS were the reports concerning Alinda, both while ſhe was alive, and after her deceaſe; but all the world could ſay with any certainty, either of her affairs or conduct, might be comprized in the following articles.

That ſhe was the only child of a very eminent and wealthy merchant in the city, who, on the death of his wife, left off buſineſs, and having purchaſed an eſtate of near a thouſand pounds a year in the country, retired thither to paſs the remainder of his days, taking Alinda with him, at that time about ten years of age.

That through ſome peculiarities in his temper, ſhe was educated in a very odd faſhion, ſecluded from all converſation with the neighbouring gentry, and ſcarce ſuffered to ſpeak to any one out of their own family.

That after his death, which happened in her ſeventeenth year, ſhe returned, with the conſent of her guardians, to London, lived in a manner ſuitable to her fortune, and had many advantageous offers of marriage, all which ſhe rejected without giving any reaſon for doing ſo.

That at one and twenty ſhe fell into a waſting diſorder, which was judged to proceed rather from ſome inward grief preying upon her ſpirits, than from any diſtemper of the body; it baffled, however, all the ſkill of the phyſicians, and ſhe expired after a tedious languiſhment of near three years, leaving the poſſeſſion of her eſtate to a nephew of her father's, who was the next of kin.

All theſe things, I ſay, were publick; but as to the motive which made her avoid liſtening to any propoſals for changing her condition, or the cauſe of that melancholy which brought on her death, every one ſpoke of them as they thought proper, and according as the diſpoſitions of their own hearts inclined them to judge.

Few, however, were charitable enough to put the beſt conſtruction on her conduct; ſome ſaid ſhe was a man-hater; others, that loving the ſex too well, ſhe could not think of entering into a ſtate which muſt confine her to one alone. Thoſe who entertained the moſt favourable opinion, imagined ſhe had unhappily engaged her heart where there was no poſſibility of a return: this laſt conjecture ſeemed indeed moſt probable, and gained ground after ſhe fell into that heavy languor which excluded her from all thoſe pleaſures ſhe had been accuſtomed to partake, and at length deprived her of life; but all this, to make uſe of the vulgar adage, was ſpeaking without book; my gift of inviſibility gave me alone the means of penetrating into the myſtery.

As I had been acquainted with her, and viſited her while ſhe continued to ſee company, I frequently ſent, or called to enquire after her health. One day when I did ſo, a ſervant belonging to her kinſman and heir at law came to the door at the ſame time, and we both received for anſwer, that ſhe expired the night before.

The fellow ran directly to inform his

master, to whom these tidings would probably be not unwelcome; and I went home, clapped on my Belt of Invisibility, and returned in a short time to the house of Alinda. The reader will perhaps wonder for what reason, and it is not fit I should keep him in ignorance.

There was a clergyman lived in the house with her, and performed the office of a chaplain; he was a person of whom her father having conceived a high opinion, had taken into his family, and set over her in the manner of a preceptor, and he had ever since continued with her. I had several times dined with him at her table, and perceived he professed an extraordinary sanctity. and the extremest regard for the welfare of his fair patroness; and this it was that made me desirous of seeing in what manner he would behave upon her death.

I expected to have found him either in his own chamber, bewailing the early fate of so beneficent a friend, or sitting by her corpse religiously moralizing on the shadowy happiness of this transitory world; but, after seeking him in vain in these and several other rooms, at last I discovered him in a closet, where I knew she reposited her things of greatest value; he was busily employed in rummaging her bureau, from the little cell of which I saw him convey, as near as I could guess, between two and three hundred pieces of gold, and several bank-bills to a much greater amount; he then pulled out a drawer which contained her jewels; he first took up one, then another, surveyed them with a greedy eye, but laid them down again, and shut the drawer; but, after a moment's pause, opened it a second time, and took out a ring set round with large brilliants. 'I may keep this,' cried he; 'it will 'scarce be missed, or, if it be, I can pre-'tend she made me a present of it in her 'life-time, and nobody will suspect the 'contrary.' Here he gave over his search, locked the bureau, put the key into his pocket, and went into his own room.

It would be hard for me to determine, whether astonishment or indignation was most predominant in me at this sight; I wished never to have beheld it, or that I had been at liberty to pluck the sacred robe from off the back of that vile prophaner of his order. I was going away with a mind more troubled than I can well express, when one of Alinda's maids came running into the room with a sealed packet in her hand, and delivered it to this disciple of Judas Iscariot, telling him at the same time, that it had been found under her mistress's pillow just after her death, but that she had forgot in the hurry to bring it to him before.

He replied, with an affected indifference, that it was very well; that he would look over the papers, and take care that whatever injunctions they contained should be fulfilled; and with these words dismissed her.

The superscription on the cover of this packet was to a lady with whom Alinda had been extremely intimate, but had not seen for a considerable time, she being excluded, as well as the rest of her acquaintance, after she fell into that deep melancholy which ended her days. The priest immediately broke the seal, and found a little letter to the above-mentioned lady, the contents whereof were as follow—

'DEAR MADAM,

'THAT I have not seen you so long 'has not been owing to want of 'friendship, but to a resolution of de-'priving myself of every thing that was 'agreeable to me in life; and that I do 'not now, in these last moments of my 'life, ask to see you, is only because I 'would not tax your pity with the sight 'of so sad an object. I am blasted, my 'dear friend, withered in my bloom, 'and scarce the shadow of what I was. 'The inclosed memoirs will inform you 'of the cruel cause, which I intreat you 'will publish to the world after my de-'cease; the shocking tale may perhaps 'be a serviceable warning to some pa-'rents as well as children. I have given 'my cousin ****** orders concerning 'some things I would have done; among 'the number of which is, that he will 'present you with my hoop diamond 'ring. I beg you will accept and wear 'it in remembrance of your dying 'friend,

'ALINDA.'

He started, bent his brows, turned pale and red by turns, and seemed in great confusion while looking over this little epistle; but all his emotions were very much increased on examining the papers that accompanied it: still as he read, he tore the leaves asunder and threw them on the fire, which happening not

not to burn very fiercely, I was quick enough to snatch from the intended devastation, and convey into my pocket, while he was taken up with the remaining pages, and thought himself secure by the tale of his misdeeds being extinct in all-devouring flames.

He had but just finished, when a servant came running into the room, and told him that Mr. ***** was below; and having been informed that Alinda's keys had been delivered to him, demanded to speak with him immediately. On this, the artful hypocrite composed his countenance, drew every feature into the attitude of solemn sadness, and holding a white handkerchief to his eyes, went down to act the part he thought would best become him before the kinsman of Alinda.

I followed close at his heels into the parlour, where Mr. ***** and two other persons waited for him. He began, with well-dissembled grief, to expatiate on the loss the world had in so excellent a lady as Alinda; and failed not, in his harangue, artfully to intermix some praises on himself, for the good principles his precepts had ingrafted on her mind.

Mr. ***** seemed to take very little notice of all he said on this occasion, and prevented him from going so far as perhaps he otherwise would have done, by telling him, in a very grave and reserved tone, that he was in great haste at present; that he came thither only to give the necessary orders concerning his cousin's funeral; and that till the melancholy ceremony was over, he should put a friend in possession of the house, and whatever effects it contained; therefore expected the keys of every thing should be immediately delivered.

To this the parson replied, that he had got them into his hands with no other view than to secure them for him, who had the undoubted right to all which his dear benefactress had been mistress of: 'For indeed,' continued he, 'I apprehended some foul play might have been attempted, as at the hour of her decease she had none but servants about her, some of whom had been too lately taken into the family to have given any great proofs of their integrity.'

After this they went through every room, examining what was to be found; all which scrutiny, as yet, afforded the heir no reason for complaint. On opening the above-mentioned bureau, and looking over Alinda's jewels, he missed not the ring he had been defrauded of; but when the other private drawers presented him so little of what he expected, he could not forbear discovering some suspicion, as it must be owned he had sufficient cause; for the person who had been before-hand with him in the search, had left no more than eight guineas and one six and thirty piece in specie, with three or four bills of an inconsiderable value.

'I am surprized,' said Mr. *****, 'that a woman of my cousin's fortune 'should leave herself so bare of cash; 'and cannot imagine by what means 'she dissipated so large a yearly income.' —'Alas, Sir!' replied the pretended zealot, with his hands and eyes lifted up to heaven, 'it ought not to appear strange 'to you, that a lady of your excellent 'kinswoman's charitable and benevolent 'disposition should refuse nothing in her 'power, when the cries of distress, and 'the moans of affliction, called for her 'assistance. If you would know in what 'manner she disposed of her money, enquire of hospitals, the prisons, and the 'necessitous petitioners that every day 'received their sustenance from her 'bounty, and you will find an easy account of her expences in her large and 'numerous donations.'

Mr. ***** only answered sullenly, that he should be better able to judge how he ought to think of the affair after he had spoke to her steward. On which the other, clapping his hand upon his breast, was beginning to make many asseverations, that till that moment he never knew what sum or sums the lady had by her when she died, or had ever looked, nor even entertained a thought of looking into any place where it might be supposed she kept her money. I staid not, however, to hear what effect his hypocrisy produced, but went home, being impatient to see the contents of Alinda's manuscript.

CHAP. VI.

WILL FULLY SATISFY THE CURIOSITY THE FORMER MAY HAVE EXCITED.

THE haste I made in snatching the following papers from the flames, happily preserved them so entirely from

the deſtruction to which they had been deſtined, that though the edges were in many places much ſcorched, yet not a ſingle word throughout the whole was any way damaged; and the reader may depend on having the ſtory as perfect as if he ſaw it in the heroine's own hand.

MEMOIRS OF THE UNFORTUNATE ALINDA, WROTE BY HERSELF, AND FAITHFULLY TRANSCRIBED FROM THE ORIGINAL COPY.

'I Am ſenſible that many people have 'been very buſy with my fame while 'living; nor do I expect to be treated 'with leſs ſeverity after I am dead: I 'cannot, however, think of an eternal 'ſeparation from this world, without 'leaving ſomething behind me which 'may ſerve to clear up thoſe paſſages in 'my conduct which, by their being 'myſterious, have given room for cen'ſure; and I do not this with any view 'of ſoftening the aſperity of the ill-'natured for the errors I have been 'guilty of, or of exciting compaſſion 'in the more generous and gentle for 'my misfortunes, but merely to the end 'that, if I am condemned, I may be 'condemned for real, not imaginary, 'facts.

'Sorry am I to accuſe a father who 'tenderly loved me: yet certain it is, 'that his over anxiety for my welfare 'has been the primary ſource of every 'woe my heart has laboured under; 'and that, by his miſtaken endeavours 'to make me great and happy, I have 'been rendered the moſt miſerable of 'created beings.

'The fortune I was born to be poſ'ſeſſed of, and ſome natural endow'ments his affection fancied in me, 'made him flatter himſelf with the hopes 'of ſeeing me one day blaze forth in all 'the pomp of quality; nor could he 'endure the thoughts of marrying me 'to any man beneath the rank of right 'honourable: and for fear any partial 'inclination of my own ſhould diſap'point theſe high-raiſed expectations, 'he kept me from the converſation of 'every one whom he thought capable of 'attracting a heart unbiaſſed by inte'reſt and unambitious of grandeur.

'Soon after my mother's death, he 'quitted buſineſs, and retired to an 'eſtate he had ſome time before pur'chaſed in the country. When we 'removed, I was too young to have any 'taſte for the pleaſures of the town, 'and regretted only the want of thoſe 'play-fellows I had left behind: in'deed, I wonder that I was not quite 'moped. I was ſuffered to go to no 'ſchool, though there was a great one 'very near us; never ſtirred beyond the 'precincts of our garden-walls; went 'not to church, becauſe there it would 'have been impoſſible for me not to ſee 'and be ſeen. No company viſited us; 'for my father deprived himſelf of the 'pleaſure of converſing with any of the 'neighbouring gentry, for fear that, as 'I grew up, I might take a liking to 'ſome one or other of their ſons, none 'of whom he thought a match good 'enough for me, as they were not dig'nified with titles. I had learned writ'ing and dancing, but was far from 'being perfect in either; and my fa'ther, being unwilling I ſhould be 'without theſe accompliſhments, took 'the pains himſelf to ſet me copies to 'improve me in the one; and at length 'provided a maſter, too old and too 'ugly to give him any apprehenſions, 'to inſtruct me in the other. Beſides 'theſe two avocations, I had no amuſe'ment except reading; which, as I 'much delighted in, my father con'ſtantly ſupplied me with ſuch books 'as he thought proper for my ſex and 'age.

'Excepting ſome treatiſes of divi'nity, the ſubjects of my entertainment 'afforded little improvement to my un'derſtanding, they conſiſting only in 'romances, and ſome very old plays; 'ſo that the ideas they inſpired me with 'were as antiquated as the habits worn 'in the days of Queen Elizabeth; and 'I was utterly ignorant of the modes, 'manners, and cuſtoms, of the age I 'lived in.

'In this ſtupid and diſpiriting 'ſituation did I paſs full nineteen 'months; about the expiration of 'which time, my father happened into 'company with a perſon who wears the 'ſacred appearance of an eccleſiaſtick, 'but is in reality one of thoſe men'tioned in Holy Writ by the name of 'wolves in ſheeps cloathing. His out'ward behaviour ſeems directed by the 'miniſters of grace and goodneſs, while

'in

R. Smirke. del.

Milton. Sculp.

Plate II.

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'in his treacherous heart a thousand 'fiends lie in wait to bring ruin and de-'struction on the credulous listener to 'his wiles.—But, before I proceed in 'my unhappy story, it is fit I should 'give a more particular character of the 'wretch who has so great a share in it.

'First, for his extraction.—His fa-'ther was a Frenchman, servant to a 'person of distinction in Normandy: 'but having more ambition than ho-'nesty, found means to rob his master 'of a considerable sum, and came over 'to England, where he set up for a 'gentleman, and a most zealous Pro-'testant; told a long plausible story of 'the great hardships he had sustained 'on the score of religion, and found 'here the same pity and encouragement 'as many others had done who fly here 'for an asylum on the same pretences.

'Soon after his arrival, he married 'a Dutchwoman, by whom he had a 'son who inherits all his father's vir-'tues, and is the person whose story is 'so unhappily interwoven with my 'own.

'Young Le Bris (for that is the name 'of this worthy family) discovered in 'his youth some indications of a good 'capacity for learning; insomuch that 'a certain lord, taking a great fancy to 'him, sent him to Westminster School, 'and afterwards to the university, in 'order to qualify him for the pulpit; 'assuring him, that he should not be 'without a benefice as soon as he should 'be fit to receive it.

'But he had scarce compleated his stu-'dies for that purpose, when all his 'present support and future expect-'ations vanished, on the sudden death 'of his noble patron; which was fol-'lowed, in a few months after, by that 'of his father; so that he was left en-'tirely destitute, his mother not being 'able to afford him the least assistance.

'After many long and fruitless soli-'citations for a living, he was glad to 'accept of a small curacy in one of the 'remotest counties in England, where 'he resided several years; but was at 'last turned out on account of neglect 'of duty, and other misbehaviour. He 'then came back to London, and gave 'out printed bills for teaching French 'and Latin at very low rates; but find-'ing little encouragement that way, 'turned Fleet parson, and earned a pre-'carious sustenance by clandestine mar-'riages.

'It was in these wretched circum-'stances that my father met with him, 'being in town on some business; and 'being told by some one, who it is 'likely knew no more of him than 'what he was pleased to say of himself, 'that he was a very worthy, though 'distressed clergyman, made him the 'offer of a handsome salary to come 'into his family by way of chaplain; 'and withal, to instruct me in the 'French language, and whatever else 'was fit for me to learn, or he was ca-'pable of teaching. He readily em-'braced the proposal; and, on my fa-'ther's return, came down with him.

'My father presented him to me as a 'kind of tutor or preceptor; told me I 'must submit myself to his directions; 'be attentive to all he said to me; and, 'in every thing, treat him with the 'greatest respect and reverence: "For," 'added he, "it is by the lessons he is "capable of giving you, that you alone "can make any shining figure in the "station wherein I hope to see you "placed."

'It will, perhaps, afford some matter 'of surprize, that my father, who had 'hitherto preserved such an extreme cau-'tion in preventing my having the least 'conversation with any man, should 'now so strenuously recommend this 'person to me: but it must be consi-'dered, that he was no less than six or 'seven and forty years of age; that, 'though not deformed, he was far from 'handsome; and, besides, had a certain 'austerity in his manners which could 'not be very agreeable to youth.

'It was, indeed, some time before I 'could be contented with the dominion 'given him over me; but my obedience to 'my father obliging me to behave to-'wards him with esteem, custom at last 'converted that complaisance, which was 'at first no more than feigned, into sin-'cere. A kind of affection, by degrees, 'mingled itself with the reverence I was 'bid to pay him; I was never so happy 'as in the hours set apart for receiving 'his instructions; and the thoughts of 'the benefits that might be supposed to 'accrue from them, afforded less plea-'sure than the praises I was always cer-'tain he would bestow on my docility. 'In fine, I not only loved the teacher

'for

'for the precept's sake, but, as the poet 'says—

"I lov'd the precepts for the teacher's "sake."

'Nor is it to be wondered at that I 'tasted more satisfaction in his society 'than I had ever known before. I 'wanted not ideas, though hitherto I 'had nothing to improve them. I had 'been allowed to converse with none 'but the servants; who could only di-'vert me with idle tales of thieves, appa-'ritions, and haunted houses. My tu-'tor, after having finished his graver 'lessons, would frequently entertain me 'with some extraordinary incident or 'other, either taken from history or ro-'mance; but whether real or fictitious, 'I had sense enough to know were 'such as enlarged my understanding as 'well as charmed my ears.

'It is certain, indeed, that he spared 'no pains to insinuate himself into my 'good graces; and no less certain also, 'that the ungrateful design he had in 'doing so succeeded, to the utter de-'struction of the whole happiness of my 'future life, and, at last, of my life it-'self, as will appear by these memoirs; 'which, while I am writing, I know 'not whether I shall have strength to 'finish.

'I shall therefore reduce my unhappy 'story into as short a compass as I can. 'In spite of the little amiableness this 'tutor had in his person, in spite of the 'vast disparity of years between us, I 'conceived the most tender affection for 'him. Alas! I was then too young, 'too innocent, to know what was 'meant by the word Love, any farther 'than that love which we naturally bear 'to a father, brother, or some other 'near relation; and thought not what 'I felt for him was any more, or would 'be attended with any other conse-'quences; and, as I apprehended no 'shame or danger in the kindness I had 'for him, endeavoured not to put a stop 'to the growth of it, nor even to con-'ceal it.

'But Le Bris saw much better into 'my heart than I did myself; and dread-'ing lest my father should be alarmed 'at the too open fondness of my beha-'viour to him, began to treat me with 'less familiarity, and exerted the ma-'ster much more than he had done. 'This change both surprized and grieved 'me: I bore it, however, for two whole 'days, without seeming to take any no-'tice of it; but on the third, being alone 'with him in his closet, where I con-'stantly went every morning to receive 'my lessons—"What is the matter "with you, my dear tutor?" said I; "I "hope I have done nothing to offend "you? I am sure I would not wil-"lingly be guilty of deserving that you "should frown upon me."—"No, "my precious charge," replied he, af-'ter a pause, "it is not in your na-"ture to give offence; but I would not "incur your father's displeasure either "towards you or me. Men are apt to "be jealous of the affections of their "children; and I am sometimes afraid "that he should think you love me al-"most as well as you do him."—"In-"deed I do so—quite as well," cried I 'eagerly. "But why should he be an-"gry at that, when he bid me use you "with the same love and respect as I "did himself?"

"People, on some occasions," an-'swered he, "will be displeased at a "too exact performance of their own "commands; and if my worthy patron, "your father, should happen to be of "this opinion, the consequence would "infallibly be an eternal separation be-"tween us; he would drive me from "his house, and I should never see my "pretty charge again."

"If you think so," returned I, "though I hate all kind of dissimula-"tion, I will make him believe I am "weary of learning of you, and that I "cannot abide you."—"Dear, pretty "angel!" cried he, tenderly taking me 'in his arms, "there is no need of go-"ing to such extremes; I would only "have you behave with more distance "towards me than you have done of "late: and it will not be amiss if you "sometimes complain that I set you too "hard lessons; because, if you should "seem to learn too fast, he may begin "to think there will soon be no occasion "for a tutor."—"Well," said I, "I "will do every thing you bid me; for "indeed it would almost break my heart "to part with you." Here he kissed 'off the tears that fell from my eyes in 'speaking these last words, and I re-'turned all his endearments with the 'same

'same affection as the fondeſt child 'would do thoſe of the moſt indulgent 'parent.

'It will perhaps ſeem a little ſtrange, 'that a girl turned of thirteen, as I 'then was, ſhould think or act in the 'manner I did; but the way in which I 'had been brought up, left me in the 'ſame ignorance and innocence as 'others of ſix or ſeven years old.

'I obeyed his inſtructions with ſo 'much exactneſs, that my father was 'far from ſuſpecting either my folly, or 'the baſeneſs of the perſon he had ſet 'over me. The reſt of the family were 'no more quick-ſighted; nor could it 'be expected they ſhould be ſo. Our 'houſe-keeper, though a very good, was 'a ſilly old woman, and knew nothing 'beyond the œconomy of thoſe affairs 'committed to her charge. The maid 'who waited on me was her daughter, 'and had been bred to think every man 'who wore the habit of a parſon was 'to be worſhipped; and the other ſer-'vants were too ſeldom with us to have 'any opportuninity of making diſco-'veries.

'I arrived at my fourteenth year. 'My father kept my birth-day ſo far, 'as to order ſomething better than ordi-'nary for dinner, and drank my health 'ſeveral times at table. Among other 'diſcourſe concerning me, he ſaid to 'Le Bris—"Well, doctor, your pupil "will now begin to think herſelf a wo-"man, and I muſt find a huſband for "her who will be able to reward the "care you have taken of her with a "good fat benefice." To which the 'fawning hypocrite replied, that the 'pleaſure of ſeeing his worthy patron's 'daughter happy would be to him the 'beſt benefice he could obtain.

'Nothing farther paſſed, at this time, 'on the ſame ſubject; but the next morn-'ing, when I was alone with my tutor 'in his cloſet—"Do you remember, "my dear Miſs," cried he, with a very 'melancholy air, "what your father "ſaid yeſterday? You will be mar-"ried ſoon, and I ſhall loſe you for "ever!"—"Do not talk ſo," replied I 'haſtily; "I do not want to be mar-"ried: but if my father ſhould compel "me to it, all the huſbands in the world "ſhould not make me forget you; no, "you ſhall always live with me; I "would not part from you to be a "dutcheſs,"—"Nor would I part "from you," ſaid he, taking me in his 'arms, "for an archbiſhoprick. And "to be plain," continued he, "I have "received letters ſince I have been here, "with the offers of ſeveral great livings; "but I have refuſed them all, rather "than quit my dear pupil."—"Have "you, indeed?" returned I, hanging 'fondly on him; "Oh how kind you "have been! I ſhould be the moſt un-"grateful creature upon earth, if I did "not love you dearly for it."—"But "will you always keep me with you?" 'cried he. "As long as I live," an-'ſwered I. "Will you ſwear it?" re-'joined he. "Yes," anſwered I; "a "thouſand and a thouſand times over, "if you deſire it."

'The wretch did not fail to take me 'at my word: I bound myſelf by the 'moſt ſolemn imprecations that words 'could form, that, when I became miſ-'treſs of my actions, he ſhould always 'live with me. After this, the hours 'we paſſed together were employed more 'in improving the fooliſh affection I had 'for him, than in any leſſons for im-'proving my underſtanding. My fa-'ther imputed the ſlow progreſs I made 'in my ſtudies not to any want of abi-'lities in my teacher, but to my own 'neglect, and often chid me for it; 'which I bore patiently, as I believed it 'the ſureſt means of keeping my dear 'tutor with me. This he took ſo kindly, 'that he told me one day, he flattered 'himſelf I loved him almoſt as well as 'I did my father. "I hope it is no "ſin," cried I childiſhly, "if I love "you quite as well."—"Far from it," 'anſwered he: "you are only his "daughter by nature, but you are mine "by affection; you are the child of my "ſoul, and therefore ought to love "me better."—"I am glad of that," 'rejoined I; "for indeed I do love you "a great deal better—I am ſure I do." 'It will ſcarce be doubted but that he 'now beſtowed upon me thoſe endear-'ments I had declared myſelf ſo well ſa-'tiſfied with; and ſome minutes after, 'as I had turned to a looking glaſs to 'adjuſt ſome diſorder in my head-dreſs, 'he pulled me to him, and making me 'ſit upon his knee—"You are very "pretty, my dear," ſaid he; "and "have no defect in your ſhape, but be-"ing a little too flat before." With 'theſe words, he thruſt one of his hands 'within my ſtays; telling me, that

'handling

'handling my breasts would make 'them grow, and I should then be a 'perfect beauty.

'Not conscious of any guilt, I was 'ignorant of shame; and thinking every 'thing he did was right, made not the 'least resistance; but suffered him, by 'degrees, to proceed to liberties, which 'had I known the meaning of, I should 'have stabbed him for attempting; but, 'as I have somewhere read—

"By no example warn'd how to beware,
"My very innocence became my snare."

'It will perhaps be supposed, that the 'perfidious man did not stop here, but 'proceeded yet farther, to the utter 'completion of my dishonour; but I 'shall do him the justice to say, that 'he never offered any such thing; though 'I have good reasons to believe he was 'prevented only by his fear of the con-'sequences that might have attended it, 'to the ruin of a design which promised 'him more satisfaction than the enjoy-'ment of my person.

'In the ridiculous way I have been 'describing did we continue till I was 'in my seventeenth year; about which 'time, my father being obliged to go 'to London on a law affair, he left the 'sole management of the family, as 'well as of myself, to his favourite 'chaplain, till he should return, which 'he expected to do in two months.

'He had not been gone full three 'weeks before a stranger came to our 'house on a visit to my tutor: he re-'ceived him with great marks of civi-'lity; and told me afterwards that he 'was the land-steward of a nobleman, 'who had sent him on purpose to court 'his acceptance of a benefice worth near 'eight hundred pounds per annum. 'As I suspected not the truth of this, 'I was terribly frightened; and cried 'out—"Then you will leave me at "last!"—"It would be with an ex-"treme reluctance I should do so," 'replied he; "but what can I do? If "I should hereafter be exposed to any "misfortunes, how would the world "blame me for having refused such an "offer?"—"What misfortunes," said 'I, "have you to fear? I shall always "have enough to support my dear "tutor."

"My dear child," resumed he, "you "forget that, when once you are mar-"ried, there will be nothing in your "power; all will be your husband's, "who may take it into his head to turn "me out of doors directly."—"No "such matter," replied I hastily; "for "I will make him promise and swear "beforehand to keep you always in the "family."—"Few men," said he, "pay any regard, after they become "husbands, to the promises and vows "they made when they were lovers. "In fine, my little angel," continued 'he, taking me tenderly in his arms, "there is but one way to secure our "lasting happiness, to which if you "agree, I will immediately refuse the "great offer now made me, with all my "future hopes of rising in the church, "and devote myself eternally to you."

'These last words I thought so highly 'obliging to me, that I hung about his 'neck, kissed his cheek, and cried I 'would do every thing he would have 'me. He then told me that a writing 'should be drawn up between us, by 'which we should mutually bind our-'selves, under the penalty of the half 'of what either should be possessed of, 'never to separate.

'On my ready compliance with this 'proposal, he ventured to make a se-'cond, even more impudent than the 'first. After seeming to consider a lit-'tle within himself—"I have been "thinking," said he, "that if the per-"son you shall marry should happen "to be of a cross, perverse nature, "though for his own sake he will not "drive me from his house, yet he may "use me so ill as to compel me to go out "of it of my own accord: suppose, "therefore, you should bind yourself "by the writing I have mentioned, "and under the same penalty, never to "marry any man without my con-"sent?"

"Bless me!" cried I, a little sur-'prized, "how can I do this? You "know I must obey my father."—"Heaven forbid you should do other-"wise!" rejoined the artful hypocrite; "you may be sure I shall never oppose "either his will, or your own inclina-"tion, in the choice of a husband: "what I speak of is only a thing of "form, which, when shewn to your "husband, will oblige him to treat me "with gratitude and respect."

'I was entirely satisfied with this; 'and replied, I would do what he de-'sired

'fired as ſoon as he pleaſed: on which—"It happens luckily," ſaid he, "that "the gentleman who came here on the "buſineſs I told you of was bred to "the law; I will let him know as "much as is neceſſary of our affair, "and get him to draw up a proper in-"ſtrument." In ſpeaking theſe words, 'he left me, and went in ſearch of his 'friend, who at that time was walking 'in the garden, waiting, no doubt, his 'coming.

'I had little time allowed me to re-'flect on what I was about to do. Le 'Bris immediately returned, bringing 'the lawyer with him; the latter of 'whom deſired to receive inſtructions 'from my own mouth for what he was 'to write; and accordingly I repeated 'the ſenſe of the obligation I was to lay 'myſelf under, leaving it to him to put 'it in ſuch words as he ſhould find 'proper. If I had been miſtreſs of the 'leaſt ſhare of common reaſon, I muſt 'have ſeen that all this ſcheme was a 'thing previouſly concerted between 'theſe two villains; for the lawyer im-'mediately pulled out of his pocket a 'large parchment, with ſeals fixed to 'it, and every thing requiſite to make 'the inſtrument firm and valid: but I 'was infatuated; all my little under-'ſtanding was ſubjected to the will of 'this wicked tutor; I gave an implicit 'faith to all he ſaid, and paid an im-'plicit obedience to all his dictates.

'The lawyer took his leave next day, 'and nothing material happened till 'within a week of the time my father 'was expected home; when, inſtead of 'himſelf, came the melancholy account 'that he had been ſeized with an apo-'plectick fit, and, though he recovered 'from it, expired within two hours 'after. He had made his will about 'a year before, by which he left me ſole 'heir of every thing he was in poſſeſſion 'of, except a few legacies; and in caſe 'his demiſe ſhould happen before I 'was married, or of age. appointed 'two gentlemen for his executors and 'my guardians. They both wrote to 'me, as did alſo my couſin *****, ac-'quainting me that it was neceſſary I 'ſhould come to London directly on 'this occaſion, and each inviting me 'to their reſpective houſes; which, as 'they lived in different parts of the 'town, I was at liberty to chuſe which 'I liked beſt.

'My tutor, however, diſſuaded me 'from accepting any of their offers; 'and told me he would write to a friend 'in London to provide a ready-fur-'niſhed houſe for my reception, till 'things were ſettled, and I ſhould re-'ſolve whether I would reſide in town 'or country. Accordingly he did ſo; 'and when we came within ten miles 'of London, we were met on the road by 'the lawyer, who, as I have ſince diſco-'vered, was his chief agent in every 'thing. He conducted us to a houſe 'in Jermyn Street, which was indeed 'very neat and commodious.

'It was late when we arrived; but 'I did not fail to ſend the next morn-'ing to my two guardians and couſin '*****, who all came to ſee me the 'ſame day, and expreſſed themſelves in 'very affectionate terms. I preſented 'my tutor to them, as a perſon for 'whom my father had a high eſteem; 'on which they treated him with that 'reſpect they ſuppoſed him to deſerve.

'I now entered into a ſcene of life al-'together new to me. Several diſtant 'relations, whom I knew only by their 'names, and many other gentlemen 'and ladies who had been acquainted 'with my mother, came to pay their 'reſpects to me. All my mornings 'were taken up with meſſages and 'compliments; and all my afternoons 'with receiving and returning viſits. 'How ſtrange was the tranſition! From 'being confined to the narrow precincts 'of a lone country manſion, I had now 'the whole metropolis to range in; 'inſtead of the grave leſſons of two old 'men, my ears were now continually 'filled with the flattering praiſes of ad-'dreſſing beaus; inſtead of having no-'thing to amuſe my hours, new di-'verſions, new entertainments, crouded 'upon each moment; and I was in-'ceſſantly hurried from one pleaſure to 'another, till my head grew giddy with 'the whirl of promiſcuous pleaſures.

'As I was young, not ugly, and 'looked upon as a rich heireſs, pro-'poſals of marriage were every day 'made to me; all which I communi-'cated to my tutor: but though many 'of them were much to my advantage, 'he always found ſome pretence or 'other for refuſing his conſent; and I 'accordingly rejected them, to the ſur-'prize of all who knew me, and the great 'diſſatisfaction of my beſt friends.

'He was not, however, half-pleased 'with the gay manner in which I lived; 'and, as soon as the affairs relating to 'my estate were settled, would fain have 'prevailed upon me to return into the 'country: but I had too high a relish 'for the diversions of the town to pay 'that regard to his advice I had for-'merly done; and, instead of comply-'ing with it, quitted the house I was 'in hired another upon lease, and fur-'nished it in the most elegant manner I 'could. He grew very grave on my 'behaviour; but as I kept firm to both 'the engagements I had made with him, 'he had no pretence to complain of my 'actions in other matters.

'For a time, indeed, my head was 'not the least turned towards marriage: 'I thought no farther of the men than 'to be vain and delighted with their 'flatteries. Happy would it have been 'for me had I continued always in this 'mind! But my ill fate too soon, alas! 'presented me with an object which 'convinced me that all the joys of pub-'lick admiration are nothing, when 'compared to one soft hour with the 'youth we love, and by whom we think 'we are beloved.

'I believe there is little need for me 'to say that this object, so enchanting 'to my senses, was the young, the hand-'some, the accomplished Amasis. The 'world, to whom he made no secret of 'the passion he professed for me, was also 'witness in what manner I received it: 'we appeared together in all public 'places; I treated him in all companies 'with a deference which shewed the 'esteem I had for him. My friends 'approved my choice; and the union 'between us was looked upon as a 'thing so absolutely determined, that 'many believed the ceremony was al-'ready over, when, to their great sur-'prize, they saw at once that we were 'utterly broke off; and, in a very short 'time after, the ungrateful Amasis be-'come the husband of another.

'My tutor, on perceiving me inclined 'to favour Amasis more than I had 'ever done any of those who had hi-'therto addressed me, began to rail at 'him, and tell me a thousand ridiculous 'stories he pretended to have heard in 'relation to his conduct. I still retained 'too much reverence for this wicked 'man to contradict what he said, but 'not enough to enable me to conquer 'my new passion: I loved Amasis, 'and continued to give him daily proofs 'of it. This so incensed him, that he 'told me, one day, that he wondered I 'would encourage the courtship of a 'man whom I must never expect to 'marry. "Why not, Sir?" answered 'I: "neither his birth nor fortune are "inferior to mine."—"Suppose them "so," rejoined he, "the most material "thing is wanting, which is my con-"sent."—"When I gave you that "power over me," said I, "you pro-"mised never to thwart my inclina-"tion."—"I did so," replied he; "but, to be plain with you, I then ex-"pected all your inclination would be "in favour of myself."—"Yourself!" 'cried I, more surprized than words 'can describe. "Yes, Alinda," re-'sumed he; "methinks the thing "should not appear so odd to you. Call "back to your remembrance the fami-"liarities that have passed between us, "and then justify, if you can, to virtue "or to modesty, the least desire of giv-"ing yourself to any other man."

'Rage, astonishment, and shame, for 'the folly I had been guilty of, so over-'whelmed my heart at this reproach, 'that I had not power to speak one 'word; but stood looking on him with 'a countenance which, I believe, suf-'ficiently expressed all those passions, 'while he went on in these terms—

"How often," continued he, "have "you hung about my neck whole hours "together, and, by the warmest fond-"ness, tempted me to take every free-"dom with you but the last; which, if "I had not been possessed of more ho-"nour than you now shew of con-"stancy, I also should have seized, and "left you nothing to bestow upon a "rival?"

'The storm which had been gather-'ing in my breast all the time he had 'been speaking, now burst out with 'the extremest violence: I raved, and 'loaded him with epithets not very be-'coming in me to make use of, yet not 'worse than he deserved. He heard me 'with a sullen silence; but when I 'mentioned the cruelty and baseness of 'upbraiding me with the follies of my 'childish innocence, he told me with a 'sneer, that he would advise me not to 'put that among my catalogue of com-'plaints: "For," said he, "the world "will scarce believe, that a lady of

"fourteen,

" fourteen, fifteen, and ſixteen, had the " ſame inclinations in toying with a " gentleman as a baby has with it's " nurſe."

' I would have replied, that the manner in which I was educated kept me ' in the ſame ignorance as a baby; but ' ſomething within roſe in my throat, ' ſtopping the paſſage of my breath, and ' I ſunk fainting in the chair where I ' was ſitting. Whether he was really ' moved with this ſight, or only affected ' to be ſo, I know not; but he ran to ' me, uſed proper means to bring me to ' myſelf, and, on my recovery, I found ' myſelf preſſed very tenderly within his ' arms. His touch was now grown ' odious to me; I ſtruggled to get looſe. " Be not thus unkind," cried he, holding me ſtill faſter; " you once took " pleaſure in my embraces, you have " confeſſed you did. Oh! then, recall " thoſe ſoft ideas, and we ſhall both be " happy!"

" No!" anſwered I, breaking forcibly ' from him; " what then was the effect " of too much innocence, would be " now a guilt for which I ſhould deteſt " myſelf as much as I do you!"—" I " ſtill love you," ſaid he. " Prove it, " then," cried I fiercely, " by giving " me up that writing which your artifices enſnared me to ſign, and ceaſe " to oppoſe my marriage with Amaſis." —" No, Madam," replied he, " if you " perſiſt in the reſolution of marrying " Amaſis, half your eſtate would be a " ſmall conſolation to me for the loſs of " you; and you cannot ſure imagine " me to be weak enough to reſign my " claim to the one, after being deprived " of the other!"

' I had not patience to continue this ' diſcourſe, but retired to my chamber; ' where, throwing myſelf upon the bed, ' I vented ſome part of the anguiſh of ' my mind in a flood of tears: after ' which, finding ſome little eaſe, I began ' to reflect, that tormenting myſelf in ' this manner would avail nothing; ' and that I ought rather to try if any ' poſſible means could be found for extricating me from the labyrinth I was ' entangled in.

' Accordingly I aroſe, muffled myſelf up as well as I could to prevent ' being known, took a hackney-coach, ' and went to the chambers of an eminent lawyer. I related to him all the ' circumſtances of my unhappy caſe, ' concealing only the names of the perſons concerned in it. He liſtened attentively to what I ſaid; and when I ' had done, aſked me of what age I was ' when I entered into that engagement ' I now wanted to be freed from; which ' queſtion I anſwering with ſincerity, he ' ſhook his head, and told me that he ' was ſorry to aſſure me I could have no ' relief from law; and that the beſt, ' and, indeed, the only method I could ' take, was to endeavour to compromiſe ' the affair with the gentleman.

' I returned home very diſconſolate, ' and was above a week without being ' able to reſolve on any thing; but my ' impatience to be united to the man I ' loved, and at the ſame time eaſed of ' the preſence of the man I hated, at ' laſt determined me to follow the lawyer's advice. I ſent for my wicked ' tutor into my chamber; talked to him ' in more obliging terms than I had ' done ſince the firſt diſcovery of his deſigns upon me; but repreſented to ' him the abſurdity of thinking of marrying me himſelf; and concluded with ' telling him, that if he would cancel ' the engagement between us, I would ' make him a gratuity of a thouſand ' pounds, and alſo be ready to do him ' any other ſervice in my power.

' He rejected this propoſal with the ' greateſt contempt. " You are cer" tainly mad, Alinda," ſaid he, " or " take me to be ſo! A thouſand pounds " would be a fine equivalent, indeed, " for the half of your eſtate, jewels, " rich furniture, plate, and whatever " elſe you are in poſſeſſion of; to all " which your marriage will give me an " undoubted claim, and I accordingly " ſhall ſeize."—" Suppoſe I never " marry?" cried I. " Be it ſo," anſwered he; " I muſt ſtill continue to " live with you; and what you offer for " my quitting you does not amount to " five years purchaſe of my ſalary and " board as your chaplain."

' Theſe words making me imagine ' his chief objection was to the ſmallneſs ' of the ſum, I told him I would double, ' nay, even treble it, for the purchaſe of ' my liberty; but he told me it would ' be in vain for me to tempt him with ' any offers of that kind; that no conſideration whatever ſhould prevail with ' him to depart from the agreement be' tween us; and he would always hold ' me to my bargain.

'The determined air with which he 'ſpoke this, made me think it beſt not 'to urge him any farther at that time. 'The next day, however, and ſeveral 'ſucceeding ones, I failed not to renew 'the diſcourſe; but though I made uſe 'of every argument my reaſon could 'ſupply me with; though I wept, 'prayed, raved, by turns cajoled and 'threatened; all I could ſay, all I could 'do, was ineffectual; and the more 'I laboured to bring him to compli-'ance, the more ſtubborn his obſtinacy 'grew.

'To make any one ſenſible what it 'was I ſuffered in this cruel dilemma, 'they muſt alſo be made ſenſible to 'what an infinite degree I loved the 'man whom it was now impoſſible for 'me to be happy with; and both theſe 'are inexpreſſible: I ſhall therefore 'only ſay, that I was very near being 'totally deprived of that little ſhare of 'reaſon Heaven had beſtowed upon 'me.

'Amaſis, to whom I had confeſſed 'the tenderneſs I had for him, was all 'this while continually ſoliciting me to 'compleat our union. One day, when 'he was more than ordinarily preſſing on 'this occaſion, and my heart being very 'full, I cried out, almoſt without know-'ing what I ſaid—"Oh, Amaſis! you "know not what you aſk, when you "aſk me to marry you!" This excla-'mation ſurprized him: but having be-'gun, I now went on—"You expect," 'ſaid I, "an eſtate of twelve hundred "pounds a year; but I will not deceive "you, you find me worth only the half "of what you have been made to "hope."—"When I made my ad-"dreſſes to the lovely Alinda," an-'ſwered he, "I had no eye to the for-"tune ſhe might bring me. But where-"fore this fruitleſs trial of my love? Your "guardians have ſhewn me the writings "of your eſtate; and I know to a ſingle "hundred what you are poſſeſſed of."—"Suppoſe," rejoined I, "that I "ſhould have previouſly diſpoſed of the "one half of what otherwiſe our mar-"riage would have given you?"—"I "will ſuppoſe no ſuch thing," replied 'he; "it cannot be!"—"It both can, "and is," ſaid I, burſting into tears; "I have unwarily entered into an en-"gagement, by which I forfeit the "moiety of all I am miſtreſs of, even "to my very jewels, if ever I marry "any man, except on certain condi-"tions; which condition, I am now "well aſſured, I never can obtain."

"Death!" cried he, ſtarting up in a 'fury, "What condition?—When!—"Where!—To whom!—On what ac-"count was this engagement made!" 'Shame would not let me anſwer to 'theſe interrogatories, and I remained 'in a kind of ſtupid ſilence. "If by "any artifices," purſued he, "you "have been ſeduced to ſign a compact "of this wild nature, unfold the whole "of the affair, and depend, that either "the laws, or this avenging arm, ſhall "do you juſtice." I now repented 'that I had ſo raſhly divulged any part 'of this fatal ſecret; not but I ſhould 'have been glad to have ſeen my wicked 'tutor puniſhed; but I knew that, on 'the leaſt attempt made for my redreſs, 'he would infallibly expoſe the follies 'I had been guilty of in regard to him; 'and, when compared with the loſs of 'Amaſis, my fortune, or even my life 'itſelf, ſeemed a leſs terrible misfor-'tune: for this reaſon, therefore, I 'refuſed the entreaties of a beloved 'lover, and ſcreened the villainy of a 'wretch whom my ſoul abhorred. In 'fine, I would reveal no more than I 'had done. Amaſis left me in a very 'ill humour; and the next morning I 'received a billet from him, containing 'theſe ſtabbing lines—

"TO MISS ALINDA *****.

"MADAM,

"I Have been conſidering on the "amazing account you gave me "laſt night; and as you refuſe to diſ-"cover either the perſon with whom "you made this engagement, or the "motives which induced you to it, can "look on it as no other than a contract "with ſome gentleman once happy in "your affections. A ſecond-hand "paſſion neither ſuits with the delicacy "of my humour, nor to encroach upon "the rights of another with my ho-"nour: I ſhall therefore deſiſt trou-"bling you with any future viſits, but "ſhall be always glad to hear of your "welfare, which I deſpair of doing "till you prevail upon yourſelf to be "juſt to your firſt vows. Sacrifice the "affection

" affection you have for me to the " obligations you are under to my " rival. I yield to his prior title all the " late glorious hopes I had conceived; " and wish you more happy with him, " than it is now in your power to make " your humble servant,

" AMASIS."

'Here ended all my hopes of happi-'neſs; all the ſoft ideas of love and 'marriage vaniſhed for ever from my 'breaſt, and were ſucceeded by others 'of the moſt dreadful nature. For ſe-'veral weeks I abandoned myſelf to 'grief and to deſpair, but pride at length 'got the better of theſe paſſions; and, 'to conceal the real ſituation of my 'heart from the enquiring world, I all 'at once affected to be madly gay, and 'ran into ſuch extrrvagancies, as, 'without being criminal in fact, juſtly 'drew upon me the ſevereſt cenſures.

'But nature will not bear a perpetual 'violence. Grief and deſpair were the 'ſtrongeſt paſſions in me. In the midſt 'of dancing, tears were ready to ſtart 'from my eyes, and ſighs from my bo-'ſom, which, when I endeavoured to 'ſuppreſs, recoiled upon my heart, and 'ſhook my frame with the moſt terrible 'revulſions. The marriage of Amaſis 'ſeconded the blow our parting had 'given: I could no longer diſſemble 'what I felt, no longer appear the 'giddy, thoughtleſs libertine, but flew 'from one extreme to the other. I now 'would ſee no company, ſhut myſelf 'up in my chamber, denied acceſs to 'my beſt friends, and never went 'abroad. I ſuffered not Le Bris to 'come into my preſence; and, I believe, 'perceiving me ſo reſolute, he would 'have accepted of a ſum of money to 'have quitted my houſe entirely: but 'I had now done with the world, had 'loſt in Amaſis all I valued in it, and 'would not give the monſter, whom I 'juſtly looked upon as the ſource of all 'my miſfortunes, any more than I was 'compelled to do, his bare board and 'ſalary.

'Behold, by theſe memoirs, the be-'ginning and progreſs of all my miſe-'ries! The end is near at hand; Death 'is already buſy at my heart, and 'allows no time to apologize for the 'errors of my conduct. Pity is all my 'aſhes can expect!'

CHAP. VII.

CONTAINS A VERY BRIEF ACCOUNT OF SOME PASSAGES SUBSEQUENT TO THE FOREGOING STORY, WITH THE AUTHOR'S REMARKS UPON THE WHOLE.

AS I know very well that ſolidity has but a ſmall ſhare in the compoſition of the lady whom Alinda had intended to entruſt with the publication of her memoirs, I thought the ſureſt way of having the will of the deceaſed performed, was not to trouble a perſon of her character with the peruſal of them, but to take the opportunity of my Inviſibilityſhip to preſent them to the world myſelf, which I accordingly have done.

And now, as I doubt not but the reader will be glad of being informed farther concerning Le Bris, I ſhall relate ſuch particulars as have come to my knowledge.

It muſt be concluded, that this unworthy preceptor, in looking over the papers of Alinda, had either not obſerved, or afterwards forgot, that the ring he had juſt taken from among her other jewels, was the very ſame mentioned in her letter to her friend, otherwiſe he would certainly have had cunning enough to have replaced it where he found it.

Mr. *****, ſoon recollecting what his couſin had ſaid to him in regard of this little legacy, and miſſing it from her other trinkets, made a ſtrict enquiry what was become of it. Le Bris, having had her keys in his poſſeſſion, was one of the firſt interrogated; and, on being ſo, boldly replied, that ſuch a ring had been beſtowed upon him by Alinda. 'How can that be,' cried the other; 'when, but three days be-'fore her death, ſhe bequeathed it to a 'lady of her acquaintance, and inſiſted 'on my promiſe of delivering it to her?' —'She muſt then be delirious,' ſaid the parſon; 'but, however that might 'be, Heaven forbid I ſhould detain 'what is even ſuſpected to be the right 'of another!' and, with theſe words, preſented the ring to Mr. *****, who received it from him without the leaſt ceremony.

This affair, notwithſtanding the hypocritical manner in which the ring was returned,

returned, gave Mr. ***** room to imagine there had been some foul play in relation to Alinda's effects. The steward proved by his books, that he had paid into her hands, a week before her death, two hundred and fifty pounds in specie, and more than twice that sum in Bank bills, being arrears he had received from the tenants. It seemed unlikely to them that she could have disposed of the money, much less have had any occasion to change the bills in so short a time; orders were therefore sent to the Bank to stop the payment of such numbers till further notice: but the precaution came too late; the person who had secreted them had been already there, and converted all his paper into cash.

The heir, however, was confident that he had been defrauded: he consulted council upon it who all advised him to have recourse to equity. Whether Le Bris had any hint given him of what was intended to be done against him, or whether his own guilty conscience made him only apprehend it, is uncertain: but he had not courage to stand the test of examination; he fled the kingdom; after having thrown aside that robe which, had he been known for what he truly was, would long before have been stripped from his sacrilegious shoulders.

But Providence would not permit him to enjoy his ill-got spoils, nor a life he had devoted to such wicked purposes. Designing to turn trader at Jamaica, he embarked for that place; but the vessel being overtaken by a storm, was lost almost in sight of shore; and he, with many others, perhaps less guilty persons, perished in the wreck. This last piece of intelligence I received from his mother; whom, though he had supported during the life of Alinda, to prevent being exposed by her clamours, he now left pennyless, destitute, and starving, in an extreme old age.

Thus did the vengeance of Heaven at last overtake the wretch who, besides his other impieties, had been guilty of the most cruel ingratitude and breach of trust, in imposing upon the simplicity of a young creature committed to his care, and utterly destroying all the views of his generous patron and benefactor.

As for the unfortunate Alinda, though it is certain her conduct cannot be wholly justified, yet, according to my opinion, it ought not to be wholly condemned. It would be passing too severe a judgment, to impute the fondness she expressed for her wicked tutor to a wanton inclination. If we consider the various arts of her seducer, the commands laid on her by her father to love and obey him as himself, the manner in which she was brought up, the perfect ignorance she was kept in of the customs of the world, and how other young ladies behaved; we shall find that these are all of them very strong pleas in her defence, and not forbear paying the mistakes of such artless innocence.

I wish as much could be alleged in her behalf on the score of her behaviour after breaking off with Amasis. The excesses into which she ran, in order to conceal the disquiets of her mind for the loss of that favourite lover, too evidently shew that she sacrificed two of the most valuable characteristicks of womanhood, her prudence and her modesty, to one of the very worst—her pride.

Nor can I offer any thing in vindication of the last stages of her life. If convinced of her error in being perpetually amongst promiscuous company, it was flying to an almost as inexcusable extreme, to shut herself up from her best friends, and avoid the society of those whose conversation might have dissipated her chagrin, and, at the same time, improved her understanding. To do this seems to me, I must confess, to have more the savour of despair, than of virtue or true fortitude.

There was, doubtless, a certain giddy propensity in her nature, which wanted to be corrected by reason, example, precept, authority, and the rudiments of a good education; all which she was denied: and it must therefore be acknowledged, that both her faults and misfortunes were entirely owing to the caprice and credulity of her father, and the base designs of the person appointed to be her governor and instructor.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

THE

INVISIBLE SPY.

BOOK II.

CHAP. I.

THE AUTHOR, BY THE HELP OF HIS INVISIBILITY, HAS DISCOVERED SUCH A CONTRAST IN THE BEHAVIOUR OF TWO MARRIED COUPLE OF DISTINCTION, AS HE THINKS WOULD BE THE UTMOST INJUSTICE TO THE PUBLICK TO CONCEAL.

PLACENTIA, after a long and passionate courtship, was at last wedded to Dalmatius. She brought him an ample fortune, a very agreeable person, and an unblemished character. She had studied the duties of a wife before she became so, and afterwards practised them in the strictest manner. Whenever she found him gay, she heightened his good-humour by her own sprightliness; and when sullen and perverse, as was too often the case, she endeavoured to dissipate his chagrin, either by playing on her spinnet, or telling him some diverting story. Without seeming to consult his palate, she always took care to put such dishes into her bill of fare as she had perceived he fed upon with most satisfaction. Whatever company suited his taste, were sure to be often invited by her, and entertained with the greatest marks of esteem and complaisance. Her whole thoughts, indeed, were taken up with obliging and making him happy: she had no will, no inclination of her own; both were entirely regulated by his: and, to add to all this, she was an excellent œconomist, understood the management of a family perfectly well, and knew how to make a grand appearance with less expence than some others are at who are accounted contemptibly parsimonious.

What would some husbands give to be blessed with so virtuous, so tender, so endearing a companion! Dalmatius, instead of placing this jewel next his heart, hung it carelessly upon his sleeve; either not knowing, or not regarding, the true value of it.

During the course of several invisible visitations I made at their house, never did I see him treat her in any degree proportionable to her merit. When in his best humours, he returned the caresses she gave him only with a cold indifference; but when any thing abroad had happened to thwart his view, either of pleasure or ambition, no man could behave with more churlishness at home. But the manner in which this couple behaved to each other will best appear from their own words, which I shall give a short specimen of on two different occasions.

They were to go out together one day, to call on some friends who were to accompany them on a party of pleasure.

sure. The landau waited at the door. He had just finished dressing, and sent up to know if his wife was ready. The message could be scarce delivered before she came flying into the room, on which the following dialogue ensued—

Placentia. I hope I have not made you wait for me?

Dalmatius. Not at all. It wants some minutes of our appointment; but I know you women are generally so long equipping yourselves, that I was willing to hasten you.

Placentia. I should know but little of the value of time, if I wasted much of it in dressing. But pray, my dear, how do you like me to-day?

Dalmatius. Like you! that's an odd question. Why, as well as ever I did.

Placentia. I should be miserable if I did not think you did. But I mean, how do you like my cloaths? you see I am all in new.

Dalmatius. Are you indeed? I should have seen nothing of it, if you had not told me: I never mind what women have on.

Placentia. Then I am disappointed, my dear; for I assure you I consulted your fancy more than my own in the choice I made of this silk; as I have heard you say an hundred times, I believe, that you thought blue and silver the most agreeable mixture that could be.

Dalmatius. So it is; but it may not happen to become every body: however, I must do you the justice to say, you look well enough in it, and I believe every body will think so.

Placentia. If you think so, my dear, it is all I wish.

In speaking this, she took hold of his hand, and kissed it with the greatest warmth of affection. He returned the favour with a slight salute upon her cheek; then looking on his watch, said he believed it was time to go, and went down stairs, she following.

The truth of the affair is this. Dalmatius is not only vain and insolent in his nature, but also amorous and inconstant to an excess. Though he no longer had any eyes for the charms of his fair wife, his heart was but too susceptible to those of other women. Miranda for some time engrossed all his devoirs; nor could her being married to the most intimate of his friends restrain him from making his unlawful addresses to her; nor the vow she had taken at the altar, deter her from gratifying an inclination he had found the way to inspire.

The husband of this lady is a man of so much indolence, and so little delicacy, that he never gives himself the least concern about what pleasures his wife may indulge herself in, provided she offers no interruption to those he takes himself. There are some, indeed, who say, that on their marriage they mutually agreed to allow each other a perfect latitude in this point; but, be that as it may, Miranda seems under no apprehensions of her conduct being called in question by him.

Her amour with Dalmatius soon became so notorious, that it was in the mouth of every one. Placentia herself was the last that gave credit to it; that excellent lady would not suffer her heart to entertain ill thoughts of the man she was bound to love, nor could any thing but the testimony of her own eyes have convinced her of the guilty truth.

Miranda came to visit her one day when she happened to be abroad; but Dalmatius being at home, the presence of his wife was little wanted. She soon returned, however; and being told that Miranda was above, ran hastily up to receive her; but not finding her in the room where company were usually introduced, yet thinking she heard the murmur of voices very near, she stepped towards the place whence it seemed to proceed, and peeping through the key-hole of an adjacent chamber, saw her husband and the lady in a posture such as could leave her no doubt of their criminal conversation.

The sudden shock at first transfixed her feet; but presently recovering herself, she retired from the guilty scene, and went into her own chamber; where finding her woman at work, she ordered her to go immediately down, and forbid the servants to take any notice of her being come home. 'I hear,' said she, 'that Miranda is below, and I am 'not very well, and would not see any 'company at this time.'

The woman being withdrawn, to do as she was commanded, Placentia threw herself into an easy chair, and fell into a profound reverie. I was present all this while, but my Belt of Invisibility did not enable me to penetrate into her thoughts; till seeming as if determined on something she had been debating within

within herſelf, ſhe roſe ſuddenly from her ſeat, and burſt into theſe words—'No, 'he ſhall never know I think him falſe, 'much leſs that I have detected him. 'Reproaches would avail me nothing, 'and might harden him in his crime. 'I am his wife; we muſt always live 'together, or be ſubject to the ridicule 'of a laughing and cenſorious world. 'Prudence, therefore, as well as duty, 'commands me to conceal the ſhameful 'diſcovery I have made; and rather en'deavour, by added tenderneſs, if poſ'ſible, to reclaim him, and oblige him 'to ſee I am at leaſt as worthy of his af'fection as Miranda.'

I left her in this reſolution, and found that for ſeveral days ſhe ſtrictly adhered to it; excepting only, that ſhe could not ſo far diſſemble her uneaſineſs as to be able to receive Miranda in the manner ſhe had formerly done: ſhe therefore deſiſted from making her any farther invitations to her houſe, and always excuſed herſelf from accepting any ſent to her by that lady.

This was enough, however, to give the lovers ſome apprehenſions that ſhe ſuſpected their intrigue; but Miranda was of too vain and gay a temper to feel any inquietude on this ſcore; and the ungrateful Dalmatius, finding himſelf treated by his wife with the ſame love and complaiſance as ever, gave himſelf not the trouble either to examine, or be under the leaſt concern, whether ſuch a behaviour proceeded from her ignorance of his fault, or her diſcretion in overlooking it.

But the ſweeteſt diſpoſition may be embittered by continual provocations. Placentia, finding that all the efforts ſhe made for regaining the affections of her huſband were ineffectual, began by degrees to grow more remiſs in her cares of pleaſing; not that ſhe ever departed from the eſſential duties of a wife, ſhe only ceaſed the practice of thoſe which, as the caſe ſtood between them, might juſtly be called works of ſupererogation.

Being to have a great route at her houſe, juſt as ſhe was going to ſend cards to invite the company, Dalmatius came into the room; and having looked over the catalogue of names, on finding Miranda's not there, began with an unuſual haughtineſs to interrogate her on that occaſion; and ſhe now, for the firſt time, replied to what he ſaid with as much indifference as ſhe had formerly done with ſubmiſſion.

Dalmatius. How happens it, Madam, that Miranda is left out among the number of your gueſts?

Placentia. I had forgot her.

Dalmatius. It is well, then, that I reminded you: but methinks a lady of her rank and character in the world might well have deſerved a place in your remembrance.

Placentia. It may be ſo; but one cannot invite every body.

Dalmatius. When any body is invited to our houſe, eſpecially on theſe occaſions, it would be the utmoſt abſurdity to leave Miranda out; therefore I inſiſt upon her coming, for your own ſake.

Placentia. Oh, Sir, you need not give yourſelf any trouble on that ſcore; I am certainly a judge how to behave to my own acquaintance: but if you are ſo deſirous of having Miranda here tomorrow, the beſt way is for you to ſend a card as from yourſelf; I doubt not but the invitation will be full as agreeable, and as readily complied with.

Dalmatius. You talk in an odd manner, Madam! And, now I think on it, I met Miranda the other day in the Park, and ſhe complained to me of a ſtrange change in you towards her; that you have never returned the laſt viſit ſhe made you; have ſcarce ſpoke to her in any publick aſſembly, and ſeemed to ſhun her preſence as much as poſſible. Pray what is the meaning of all this?

Placentia. That, Sir, is a queſtion which perhaps neither you nor ſhe would thank me for anſwering directly.

Dalmatius. I underſtand you, Madam, however. You have got notions in your head not becoming in you to indulge, nor worthy any endeavours of mine to expel. I would only have you be wiſer; and conſider, that of all domeſtick animals a jealous wife is the moſt contemptible.

He flung out of the room with theſe words, and all the tokens of diſdain and indignation in his countenance; leaving Placentia in a confuſion not eaſy to be deſcribed. I could perceive, however, by the geſtures of that unhappy lady, that ſhe repented having gone ſo far; yet knowing herſelf the only injured, could not yield either to recede from her reſolution on the account of Miranda, or make uſe of any attempts to ſoften

so ill-founded a resentment in her husband.

It is now said that his amour with Miranda is on the decline; that a new face has utterly eclipsed all the charms he lately found in hers; and that Placentia has at least this consolation under her misfortune, to find that no one beauty has the power long to retain the heart she has lost: so just are the poet's words—

'When fix'd to one, love safe at anchor
'rides,
'And dares the fury of the winds and
'tides;
'But losing once that hold, to the wide
'ocean borne,
'It drives at will, to ev'ry wave a scorn.'

Marriage, though a sacred institution, though ordained by Heaven to bestow the supremest felicity we mortals are capable of enjoying, becomes the severest curse, when souls ill suited to each other are joined in it's indissoluble bonds; and it too often happens, that those who by nature and education are qualified to give and receive the greatest happiness, are rendered the most miserable, through the perverseness of a bad-tempered partner.

Montelion has been twice married. He has experienced both all the contentments, and all the inquietudes, of that state, with women of humours as widely different as light and darkness; I had almost said, as heaven from hell. His first lady, as she was excelled by none in exterior perfections, so she was equalled but by very few in the more valuable endowments of the mind. His life, while in possession of this treasure, was one continued scene of harmony and love. But soon, alas! the blissful prospect vanished; the fair, the virtuous, the tender Erminia, died! and, to add to the misfortune of her disconsolate husband, left no pledge behind her of their mutual affection.

Though in that season of life when amorous flames are at their highest bent, those of Montelion seemed all buried in the grave of his dear Erminia. He remained for several years the lonely occupier of a widowed bed. At last, however, the ardent desire of having an heir for his estate got somewhat the better of his melancholy, and determined him on a second venture.

In the choice he made, he consulted neither fortune nor beauty: the one, indeed, he wanted not; and as for the other, since his Erminia's death all women were equal to him, and he regarded the lovely and unlovely with the same indifference. He therefore married Ferocia, merely because she was one of the daughters of a fruitful family, and likely to answer the only end which induced him once more to become a husband.

Every body was astonished at these nuptials, and much more so on the knowledge of Ferocia's behaviour afterwards. But I shall present my reader with the character of this lady, as it was given by an impartial hand in a letter to a friend.

'Ferocia, now the wife of Montelion,
'is a woman plain in her person, weak
'in her understanding, capricious and
'fantastick in her humour, unpolished
'in her manners; and, what is worse
'than all, insufferably vain and insolent on her new dignity, without one
'grain of true love or gratitude for the
'man who has raised her to it.'

My gift of invisibility assisted me in proving the truth of the above in all it's parts. Farther I will not pretend to say; for though it is a vulgar adage, that 'Where there is no modesty there 'is little sign of honesty,' and I have heard severe censures passed upon her virtue, yet I never could make any discoveries to her prejudice on that score; and am apt to believe, that the rampant airs she gives herself among the men, are, in reality, more owing to a hoidenly than an amorous disposition.

Montelion seems to see her behaviour in the same light I do; yet, for the sake of his own honour, cannot but wish she would act with more reserve. They had not been married above three months, when he was seized with a fit of the gout, which confined him to his apartment. Ferocia came in, covered over with jewels, and blazing like a star; and, without expressing any concern for his indisposition, told him that she was going to Lady Primwell's route; on which ensued the following dialogue between them—

Montelion. I flattered myself, Madam, with having the happiness of your company at home this evening, as I am not in a condition to stir out.

Ferocia. Oh heavens! I should make the

the worſt nurſe in the world! What good would my ſtaying do you?

Montelion. A great deal, Madam; and I hope I need ſay no more to engage you not to leave me.

Ferocia. Indeed, my lord, I muſt go; I have given my promiſe.

Montelion. You will be eaſily excuſed. Nobody will expect a wife on a party of pleaſure, when they know her huſband is confined by pain. Come, my dear, you muſt not think that ſtaying at home one night is an act of too much complaiſance to a man who would refuſe nothing for your ſatisfaction.

In ſpeaking this, he drew her gently towards him, and gave her two or three very tender kiſſes; but, in doing ſo, a little ſnuff he had between his thumb and finger happened to ſcatter on her glove; on which ſhe ſtarted from him, and returned his kind expreſſions in theſe terms—

Ferocia. Piſh! How ſilly this is! You have ſpoiled my gloves with your naſty muff. Here, John! William! run one of you to my dreſſing-room, and bid Faddle bring me a pair of gloves in a minute.

Montelion. Don't put yourſelf into a paſſion, my dear; but ſit down, and reſolve to oblige me. I'll call for cards, and we'll have a game at picquet.

She made no reply; but hung down her head, and ſtood counting the ſticks of her fan till Faddle came into the room.

Ferocia. Where are the gloves?

Faddle. Madam, I thought the fellow was miſtaken, when he bid me bring gloves; as your ladyſhip had juſt now a clean pair.

Montelion. Aye, Mrs. Faddle, there is no occaſion. Rather get your lady's night-dreſs ready; for ſhe has changed her mind, and does not go abroad.

Ferocia. Indeed I both muſt and will, my lord. Do you imagine, that becauſe you are ſick, I muſt mortify myſelf, and be mewed up with you till I am ſick too? No, no; I am not weak enough to comply with ſo unreaſonable a requeſt; therefore adieu. I ſhall ſcarce ſee you till late; and hope then to find your lordſhip better.

She waited not for any reply he might have made, but flounced out of the room, followed by her woman. Montelion ſoon after heard the footman called to attend her ladyſhip, and the chariot drive from the door. How would ſome huſbands have reſented ſuch uſage! yet Montelion bore it, without any ſhew of impatience, from one endowed with no charms to excite either love or reſpect. His tameneſs, however, is not owing to any meanneſs of ſpirit in him, but rather to his good ſenſe. He does not care to have his domeſtick affairs become the talk of the town, nor to come to an open rupture with the woman he has made his wife; and having in vain eſſayed all the means that prudence and good-nature could ſuggeſt to bring her to a more reaſonable way of thinking, he has at laſt given over the attempt; ſeems not to regard whatever ſhe does, but endeavours to loſe the thoughts of his private diſquiets in the toils of publick buſineſs.

CHAP. II.

RELATES A STRANGE INSTANCE OF BIGOTRY AND ENTHUSIASM IN A PARENT.

NOTHING is ſo deſirable as religion, nothing ſo truly amiable as piety. What bleſſings does it not diffuſe to all who are within the reach of it's influence? From it all other virtues are derived, and by it alone we are enabled to act with vigour. Yet how often have we ſeen this heavenly quality perverted into it's very oppoſite; and, from the ſpirit of meekneſs, benevolence, mercy, charity, and univerſal love, become the ſpirit of pride, contention, envy, hatred, and perſecution! Like the archangel, who ſtanding neareſt to the throne of glory, precipitated himſelf into the loweſt hell.

Bigotry and ſuperſtition are the ſureſt engines which the ſubtle enemy of mankind makes uſe of for our deſtruction. All other crimes carry their ſtings with them; conſcience reproaches us for doing amiſs, and we fall not again into the like without extreme remorſe and ſhame: but the man poſſeſſed of this holy frenzy of the mind glories in his perſeverance, becauſe he looks upon it as the higheſt virtue.

A gentleman, whom I ſhall diſtinguiſh by the name of Flaminio, had attained to the age of fifty, without having been known to be guilty of any one

thing which could call in queſtion either his honour, good-nature, or good ſenſe. He had lived careſſed by his friends, reſpected by his acquaintance, and almoſt adored by his tenants and dependants. He had one ſon, and one daughter; and having loſt his wife in bringing the latter into the world, he never ventured on a ſecond, but laid out all his cares on the education of theſe two.

Adario, for ſo I ſhall call the ſon, having finiſhed his ſtudies to the ſatisfaction of all thoſe who had the charge of inſtructing him, in order to compleat the fine gentleman, was ſent to make the tour of Europe, under the care of a diſcreet and experienced governor. Iſabinda, the daughter, remained at home with her father; and being extremely beautiful, and miſtreſs of every accompliſhment befitting her ſex and rank, attracted the love and admiration of as many as had opportunity to be witneſs of her perfections.

Being ſuch as I have deſcribed, it may eaſily be ſuppoſed that, in a town like this, there were not few who declared themſelves her lovers. Lyſimor was among the number of thoſe who had the leaſt to fear, and the moſt to hope for, in his addreſſes to her. He had an agreeable perſon, was deſcended of a good family, and was heir to an eſtate adequate to his birth. He had been fellow-ſtudent with Adario; and though, being ſome years older, he had left the univerſity before him, they had always kept up a correſpondence. He was introduced to the acquaintance of the ſiſter by the intimacy he had with the brother; who failed not, before he went abroad, to recommend his friend's pretenſions to her in the ſtrongeſt terms.

He it was, indeed, who alone had the power of pleaſing her. Her young heart preſently diſtinguiſhed him from all his rivals; but her modeſty and diſcretion would not permit her to give him any marks of a peculiar regard, till authorized to do ſo by the perſon ſhe had always been taught to conſider as the ſole diſpoſer of her fate.

Lyſimor, who had alſo been bred in the moſt ſtrict obedience, made not his court to Iſabinda without having firſt communicated the paſſion he had for her to his father, and received his approbation. The two old gentlemen had afterwards an interview on this occaſion; and Flaminio, being perfectly ſatisfied with the propoſals made by the other, readily gave his conſent, on condition his daughter, whoſe inclinations he ſaid he would never go about to force, ſhould have no objection to the match.

The ſame evening, as they were ſitting together at ſupper, Flaminio related to his daughter all that had paſſed between him and the father of Lyſimor; and added, that he looked upon him as a very deſerving young fellow; that his birth and fortune were unexceptionable; and that, if ſhe had no averſion to his perſon, he ſhould be heartily glad of an alliance with him.

Iſabinda bluſhed like the ſun juſt peeping from a cloud, on hearing her father ſpeak in this manner; and could ſcarce recover herſelf from the glad ſurprize enough to tell him that, ſince he was pleaſed with ſuch a union, ſhe ſhould be all obedience to his will. She ſaid no more; but the ſoft confuſion ſhe was in, and the joy which ſhe could not reſtrain from ſparkling in her eyes, ſufficiently teſtified how much her inclinations correſponded with her duty. 'Well, 'then,' reſumed he, 'from this time 'forward receive Lyſimor as the perſon 'by Heaven and me ordained to be 'your huſband.'

I leave it to my fair readers to conceive what delightful images muſt fill the mind of Iſabinda, after this ſanction to an affection which hitherto ſhe had not dared to indulge, yet had it not in her power to ſubdue. For my own part, though I was preſent during all the converſation ſhe had with her father on this head, I left the houſe when ſhe retired to her chamber; which ſhe did more early than ordinary that night; I gueſs, to have an opportunity of giving a looſe to the tranſports of her mind.

As for Lyſimor, the joy he felt on being acquainted with what his father had done for him, was very much allayed by the perfect ignorance he was in of having made any impreſſion on the heart of his charming miſtreſs. He went to viſit her the next day, hoping, yet trembling, for the event: but ſoon the lovely maid put an end to his ſuſpence, by aſſuring him, that for his ſake alone ſhe could reſolve, without reluctance, on changing her condition.

Not only the lovers themſelves, but both their parents alſo, ſeemed equally impatient for the conſummation of theſe nuptials. A ſhort day was appointed for

for the celebration; the articles of settlement and jointure were drawing up; new habits, new coaches, new equipages, all necessary preparations were carrying on with the utmost expedition: when, lo! a sudden and unexpected storm bore down at once the pleasing prospect of their hopes; for ever dashed their expected joys, and spread a lasting scene of desolation and despair! How vainly, alas! do we depend on mortal happiness! The gaudy bubble fleets before us like the wind, eludes our grasp, and mocks the idle chace, as Sir Robert Howard justly expresses it—

'Short is th' uncertain reign and pomp of
'mortal pride.
'New turns and changes ev'ry day
'Are of inconstant Chance the constant
'arts.
'Soon she gives, soon takes away:
'She comes, embraces, nauseates you, and
'parts.'

Flaminio, from being the most chearful, good-natured man, that could be of his age, became all at once transformed into the most sullen, gloomy, and discontented. From expressing the utmost eagerness for his daughter's wedding, he now appeared wholly negligent of every thing relating to it. When the father of Lysimor, and the lawyer employed to draw the marriage-writings, went to his house, he ordered his servants to say he was from home; made several tradesmen carry back the things he had bespoke for the solemnity; and, in fine, put an entire stop to all he had been so solicitous in forwarding.

The father of Lysimor began to think himself affronted by this proceeding, and both the lovers were amazed and troubled beyond description at it: but though the young gentleman came once or twice every day to visit his dear mistress, Flaminio so careful'y avoided his presence, that he could get no opportunity of complaining to him; and Isabinda was too much terrified by the unusual austerity of his looks, to have the courage to open her lips to him on this score.

She was one afternoon alone in the fore-parlour, waiting the approach of Lysimor; when her father, who was in a back room, called her to him. She immediately obeyed; and, on her entrance, was accosted by him in this manner—

Flaminio. Well, Isabinda, I suppose you expect Lysimor here presently?

Isabinda. Yes, Sir. It is near the hour when he generally visits me.

Flaminio. His company may be spared at this time. I have something to say to you, and would not be interrupted. I have therefore given orders to the servants to tell him, when he comes, that you are gone abroad.

Isabinda. He will scarce believe that, because I promised to take a walk with him in the Mall after tea; but if you require my attendance, I will dismiss him the moment he comes.

Flaminio. No, it shall be as I have said. If you marry him, you will have opportunities enough to see each other; and if you do not, it will be best for you not to have settled your affections upon him.

Isabinda. Sir, I should never have entertained the least thoughts of marrying either him or any other man, without having first received your commands to do so.

Flaminio. However that may be, events we think most near are often the farthest from being accomplished; and, for that reason, a young maid ought never to dispose of her heart till it is accompanied by her hand.

Isabinda. I hope, Sir, that Lysimor has done nothing to forfeit the goodwill you once had for him.

Flaminio. No, no; I have nothing to say against the young gentleman: and should still approve of him for a son-in-law, but——

Isabinda. But what! I beseech you, Sir, keep me not on a rack more cruel than death!

Flaminio. I am sorry to see you so much concerned on his account; I hoped to have found you more indifferent: but, since your inclinations are so deeply engaged, wish from my soul there was a possibility for your union.

Isabinda. Ah, Sir, what prevents it!

Flaminio. A father's everlasting happiness or misery.

These words, the emphasis with which he uttered them, and the horror that appeared in his countenance, frighted the poor young lady almost into fits. She started, trembled; and, not able to comprehend the meaning of what she heard, the

the moſt terrible ideas came into her mind; which made her rather dread than wiſh an explanation.

She ſtood pale as a ghoſt, and motionleſs a a ſtatue; while her father, greatly agitated, walked backwards and forwards in the room with irregular and diſordered ſteps. Both remained ſpeechleſs for ſome time. At laſt—'I cannot as yet,' ſaid he, 'bring myſelf to 'relieve the ſuſpence I ſee you in; but 'will do it ſoon. Retire, therefore, my 'dear Iſabinda, to your chamber,' continued he, with a deep ſigh; 'and 'invoke the Almighty Diſpenſer of 'bleſſings to give you that compoſure 'of mind, which can alone enable you 'to ſupport chearfully whatever fate 'he is pleaſed to ordain for you.'

She went to her chamber, as commanded; but whether to pray or weep, I will not pretend to inform my readers. I remained with Flaminio while he ſtaid below, which was not long; then followed him up to his cloſet, where he ſhut himſelf in, plucking the door ſo haſtily after him, I had not time to enter; but peeping through the key hole, I ſaw he had thrown himſelf proſtrate on the floor, with his hands and eyes lifted up to heaven, ſeeming very earneſt in devotion. I left him in this poſture, and returned home, much ſurprized at what I had ſeen and heard.

Impatient, however, to get ſome farther light into an affair which at preſent appeared ſo myſterious to me, I went the next morning to Flaminio's houſe. I entered Iſabinda's chamber with a ſervant who was carrying in a diſh of chocolate. That unhappy lady was ſitting leaning her elbow on a table, and her head upon her hand; her eyes red with the late-fallen tears, and all ſymptoms of deſpair and grief about her. But nothing being to be learnt here, I went in ſearch of Flaminio, whom I found in his dreſſing room. He was in a muſing poſture, but had a countenance much more ſerene than the day before. I had not been many minutes with him, before he rung his bell for a footman, whom he ordered to fetch Iſabinda to him. She preſently came; and I was witneſs of the following extraordinary dialogue—

Flaminio. Sit down, my child. I was to blame to leave you in the perplexity I did laſt night, but it was occaſioned only by my too great tenderneſs. I could not eaſily reſolve to tell you a thing which I feared would make you with I had loved you leſs.

Iſabinda. Sir, I have always looked upon your paternal affection to me as the greateſt bleſſing of my life.

Flaminio. I believe you have; and I had never any cauſe to think you did not return that affection with an adequate proportion of filial love and duty.

Iſabinda. I flatter myſelf, Sir, that no one of my actions has ever ſhewn the contrary.

Flaminio. None, indeed, my deareſt child. I ought not, therefore, to have doubted of your ready compliance in a thing on which my ſoul's eternal peace depends. Tell me, my Iſabinda, would you not willingly forego a trifling ſatisfaction to enſure your father's happineſs both here and hereafter?

Iſabinda. I ſhould elſe, Sir, be unworthy of the goodneſs you have ſhewn me.

Flaminio. Well, then, my deareſt Iſabinda, I will no longer heſitate to make thee the confidante of a ſecret which hitherto has never eſcaped my own boſom. It is a ſtory will very much ſurprize thee: but ſee thou mark me well, and be attentive to every particular.

Iſabinda. You may be certain, Sir, I will be ſo.

Flaminio. Know, then, that going into the country to take poſſeſſion of that eſtate which you have heard devolved on me by the death of my uncle, I fell into the acquaintance of a young lady in the neighbourhood, called Harriot. She was handſome. I had a heart entirely free; and I became, as I then thought, violently in love with her. But marriage being a thing of too ſerious a nature to be agreeable to my inclinations at that time, the addreſſes I made to her were extremely private. Such as they were, however, they ſucceeded but too well; and, on my promiſing to make her my wife, obtained all the gratification my paſſion could require.

Having finiſhed the buſineſs which had brought me thither, I ſet out ſoon after on my return to London. Harriot took leave of me without much regret; being to follow in a few days with her father and the whole family, the winter ſeaſon coming on. On her arrival, ſhe ſent me immediate notice; and I provided a

proper

proper place for our private interviews, which were not seldom, my amorous desires being yet unsatiated.

Perhaps her youth, beauty, and the extreme tenderness she had for me, might have engaged me for a much longer time, had not the charms of your dear mother rendered all those of the whole sex besides contemptible in my eyes. I adored her from the first moment I beheld her. The flame she inspired me with was widely different from what I had ever felt before: marriage was no more a bugbear to me; on the contrary, I languished to be linked in those bonds with a person of such distinguished merit, and the means of attaining that felicity engrossed all my thoughts.

I now made a thousand excuses to avoid meeting poor Harriot; and when her repeated solicitations drew me sometimes to her, my behaviour was so cool, so changed from what it was, that she could not but see into the cause; she grew jealous, inquisitive, and soon discovered my honourable attachment.

Tears, reproaches, and complaints, now furnished me with a pretence to quarrel. I told her I would see her no more: and indeed she put it out of my power to break my word; for in three days after we had parted in this manner, she died; not without some suspicion of poison, as I have heard it whispered: but whether she had recourse, in reality, to any such desperate method to rid her of a life she was grown weary of, or whether grief alone did the work of fate, I know not; but am too certain, however that might be, my ingratitude was the cruel cause, though she was too generous ever to declare it; and not one of all her numerous kindred or acquaintance had the least intimation of the intercourse between us.

The shock I felt on the first intelligence of this sad catastrophe is inconceivable, and would doubtless have made a lasting impression on me, if the progress I every day made in my courtship to the object of my virtuous affection, the gaining her consent to be mine, our marriage, and the hurry of pleasures attending that solemnity, had not too much taken up my heart to leave room for any other sensations than those of joy and transport.

Events once obliterated from the mind by others of greater consequence to our happiness, seldom or never recur to it again. A long succession of years passed over without any remembrance of the unfortunate Harriot; and it is but very lately that the thoughts of her have begun to trouble my repose.

But Heaven would not suffer me to be always dead to a just sensibility of the crime I had been guilty of. Not many nights ago—whether sleeping or awake I cannot pretend to be positive—I saw, at least I thought I saw, that injured woman stand by my bed-side: I heard her, too, with a voice hollow, yet sonorous as an echo, bid me repent, and atone for my past transgression. 'How 'shall I atone?' cried I. 'Devote to 'Heaven the dearest thing you have on 'earth,' replied the phantom, and in that instant vanished from my sight.

It is not possible for me to express, much less for you to conceive, the horrors I sustained after this amazing dream or apparition, I know not which to call it: but am since convinced it was no other than my guardian angel, who, under the form of Harriot, instructed me how to atone for my crime; and should I neglect or disobey his admonition, it would more than double my transgression, and sink my soul down to the lowest hell. 'Devote to Heaven the dearest 'thing thou hast on earth,' the vision said. Now what have I on earth that is truly dear to me except your brother and yourself? I have examined well my heart, and find that of the two you sit nearest there: it is you, therefore, my Isabinda, that is ordained to be the sacrifice; and, like faithful Abraham, I must submit to lay my darling on the altar.

Isabinda. Oh, Sir, you will not kill me!

Flaminio. Kill thee, my child! rather would I suffer this flesh of mine to be torn with burning pincers, every limb dislocated, my breast laid open, and my panting heart exposed to publick view, than hurt the smallest part of thy dear precious frame! No, I mean to present thee a living sacrifice on the altar of piety; to consecrate thee to the service of Heaven; and to make thee, while on earth, a companion for the saints above. In fine, my Isabinda, you must be a nun.

Isabinda. A nun! Oh heavens!

This poor young lady seemed no less terrified with the word Nun than she had been with that of Sacrifice: but all I can say is, not all the obedience Isabinda had hitherto been practised in, nor

all

all her father's authority, nor the arguments he urged, could either reconcile her to the way of life he enjoined, or oblige her to submit to it with any degree of willingness; and her tears and entreaties being equally in vain to make him recede from the resolution he had taken, he dismissed her from his presence; telling her, in a very angry tone, that he had now done with persuasions, and should take measures to bring her to her duty more becoming his character as a father.

CHAP. III.

THE AUTHOR FINDS HIMSELF, THOUGH WITH AN INFINITE DEAL OF DIFFICULTY, OBLIGED TO MAKE A DISCOVERY OF SOME PART OF THE UNHAPPY CONSEQUENCES WHICH IMMEDIATELY ATTENDED THE CRUEL RESOLUTION FLAMINIO HAD TAKEN IN REGARD TO HIS DAUGHTER.

I Had never yet attempted to see how Lysimor brooked the late delays that had been given to his intended nuptials, so now took it into my head to go. A servant, who was carrying out a wig-box, gave me an opportunity of slipping into the house. I found the old gentleman with a letter in his hand, which seemed to excite in him very great emotions; but as he had just finished the perusal as I entered the room, and was putting it into his pocket, I could not possibly know any thing of the contents. I was not, however, long unsatisfied. Lysimor was returned from a morning walk he had been taking, and entered a few moments after. He appeared in little better humour than his father; and, when he had paid the usual salutation, spoke in this manner—

Lysimor. Certainly, Sir, something very extraordinary must have happened to occasion this sudden change both in Flaminio and his daughter. I have been to enquire of her health this morning, after being disappointed of seeing her last night, and have a second time been denied access.

Father. I could have told you that, if I had known you had been there. I have just received a letter from Flaminio. See what the old coxcomb writes.

With these words he drew the letter he had been reading from his pocket, and threw it on a table. Lysimor snatched it up with the greatest eagerness, and found the contents as follow—

'SIR,

'AN over-ruling fate deprives me of 'the honour of your alliance, 'and disposes of my daughter in a different manner from what I once intended. I must therefore intreat your 'son will make no future visits at my 'house, nor take any steps to traverse 'those designs which I am obliged to 'pursue in relation to Isabinda. As 'for yourself, Sir, I hope you'll impute 'this alteration in my conduct to what 'it really is, an unavoidable necessity; 'and not to want of respect in him, who 'in all things else would readily subscribe himself, Sir, your most obedient 'servant,

'FLAMINIO.'

Surprize and resentment now seemed to strive which should be most predominant in the countenance of Lysimor. He stamped, bit his lips, paused a while, then spoke.

Lysimor. This must be madness. No man in his senses could possibly act thus. What! after expressing the highest satisfaction in the intended union between our families, after the warmest professions of respect to you, Sir, and of love to me, to affront both in so gross a manner, without the least cause given on our part; 'tis unaccountable, 'tis monstrous! But I cannot think Isabinda shares in her father's phrenzy.

Father. Whatever she does, it behoves you not to think of her at all. Sooner would I have my family extinct, and my name perish to eternity, than have a branch of that stem grafted on a tree of mine; and I should be sorry to find you mean-spirited enough to retain a wish that way.

What reply Lysimor would have made I know not, for the old gentleman was called hastily out of the parlour to one who waited for him in another room. Lysimor, when alone, fell into a deep musing, in which he sighed and frowned alternately, and seemed divided between love and resentment. But whatever his thoughts were, he had no opportunity of indulging them. A servant presented him with a letter, which he said was brought

brought by a porter, who desired it might be given into his own hands, and waited for an answer. Lysimor no sooner saw the characters on the superscription, than the late paleness in his cheeks was converted into the most lively red. He broke the seal with trembling impatience, and found it contained these lines—

'DEAR SIR,

'MY father, in an unaccountable ca-
'price, tears me from your arms,
'and is resolute to make me a nun, or
'rather a martyr of me. Prayers and
'tears are ineffectual to move him from
'his purpose; I have tried both in vain;
'and it is by flight alone I can avoid a
'fate more dreadful to me than all I
'can suffer by abandoning his protec-
'tion. If you have compassion, I must
'not now say love, assist me in my
'escape. I have made no intimacies,
'have no confidents on whom I dare
'rely in this distracting exigence, and
'there remain not four and twenty hours
'between me and the impossibility of
'averting the doom that threatens me.
'I am at present a close prisoner in my
'chamber; and to-morrow, early in the
'morning, am to take coach for Do-
'ver, thence to embark for Dunkirk,
'under the care of a person whose vi-
'gilance I cannot hope to elude, and
'who is not to quit my sight one
'moment, till I am, beyond redemp-
'tion, lodged within the walls of a con-
'vent. A girl lately taken into the
'house, pitying my distress, has pro-
'mised to get this conveyed to you, and
'also to grease the hinges of the street-
'door, that I may go out with less
'noise when the family are all in bed,
'which I believe will be pretty early, as
'my father is too much out of humour
'to see any company. If you will take
'upon you the trouble to wait for me
'at the end of our street, next the
'square, between the hours of twelve
'and one, and conduct me to some place
'where I may be secreted till the search
'which doubtless will be made after me
'is over, I shall endeavour to earn a
'subsistence by such ways as I am ca-
'pable of, and fortune shall present.
'If you ever truly loved me, you will
'not think this request too presuming,
'but rather be sorry for the sad acci-
'dent that compels me to make it. I
'beg a line, in answer to this, may in-
'form me what I have to depend upon
'from your good nature, and what
'hope remains for the forlorn and most
'wretched

'ISABINDA.'

The lover appeared extremely touched with this melancholy epistle; and when he had finished, threw his arms across his breast, and cried out—'Poor Isa-
'binda! What dæmon has taken pos-
'session of her father's brain!—But I
'should be even yet more cruel to refuse
'the assistance she implores. No, love,
'honour, and generosity, forbid it!
'Whatever shall be the consequence, I
'must, I will defend her from the fate
'she dreads.' He then called his foot-man, and bid him order the person who brought this letter to wait for an an-swer at some distance from the house, lest his father should happen to see him, and be inquisitive from whom, and on what business he came. Having given these instructions, he ran hastily into his chamber, where I followed, and saw him sit down to his bureau, and write in these terms—

'TO ISABINDA.

'MY FOR EVER DEAR ISABINDA,

'WHATEVER are my sufferings
'in this unexpected turn of our
'affairs, I cannot be wholly unhappy
'while I know you have had no part in
'the inflicting them. Why do you un-
'kindly make that a request, which you
'ought to be convinced you might
'command from my affection? I have
'devoted myself entirely to your ser-
'vice; and no change of circum-
'stances can ever make me withdraw a
'heart attracted by so much beauty, and
'confirmed in it's choice by so much
'merit. Yes, my charming Isabinda,
'I am unalterably yours; and you may
'depend upon my love and honour for
'every thing you either do, or shall
'hereafter stand in need of. I shall
'employ this day in procuring a proper
'place for your reception; and shall an-
'ticipate the hours you mention to
'watch for your enlargement, which I
'pray Heaven to facilitate, and bring
'you safe to the arms of, my dear Isa-
'binda, your faithful and most con-
'stant

'LYSIMOR.'

He had but juſt diſpatched this, when his father came into the room; and, with a voice and air vaſtly different from what he had a few minutes before aſſumed, ſpoke to him in theſe terms—

Father. I believe, ſon, I have interrupted your dreſſing: but no matter; I bring you news to conſole you for the loſs of your late miſtreſs. My old friend, Mr. Countwell, the banker, has been with me. His fair charge, Emilia, comes to town next week; and he has offered, for a ſmall premium, to make up a match between you. He aſſures me ſhe is a moſt lovely young creature, is entirely independent of any one, and has twenty thouſand pounds in her pocket, which is more than double the fortune you would have had with the daughter of that fool Flaminio.

Lyſimor. I am greatly indebted to your goodneſs, Sir, and to the conſideration Mr. Countwell has of me; but, Sir, you know I have long loved Iſabinda, and you muſt give my heart ſome time to wean itſelf from it's former attachment.

Father. Pſhaw! one woman, like one nail, will drive out the thoughts of another. Your heart muſt be ſtrangely ſtupified, if it does not dance to the muſick of twenty thouſand pounds. Remember, ſon, the eſtate you are to enjoy at my deceaſe does not amount to quite ſixteen hundred pounds per annum; and that I have been obliged to mortgage ſome part of it, to diſcharge the debts your extravagant elder brother contracted before he died. Emilia's fortune will retrieve all. Well, the breaking off your match with Iſabinda is the moſt lucky thing that could have happened.

Lyſimor. But, Sir, we cannot be ſure the young lady will approve my ſuit.

Father. Mr. Countwell will manage that. He is a ſhrewd man, he knows what he does, and will undertake nothing without performing it. You have only to ſay a few fine things to Emilia, which you know well enough how to do, when once you get Iſabinda out of your head.

Lyſimor. Sir, I ſhall uſe my beſt endeavours to obey you in every thing.

Father. That is well ſaid. I want no obedience but what is for your own intereſt, and will leave you to reflect how many charms there are in twenty thouſand pounds, and then you will fall in love with the fortune, whether ever you do ſo with the lady or not.

This converſation being ended, I recollected that I had ſome affairs of my own to diſpatch, and began to think of retiring, but was prevented by Lyſimor; who walking in a continued and very haſty motion about the room, obliged me to keep cloſe in the corner where I had placed myſelf, and not venture to ſtir, leſt he ſhould ruſh againſt me. At firſt I was a little vexed at this confinement, but afterwards rejoiced heartily at it, as it gave me an opportunity of making a diſcovery, which otherwiſe, perhaps, I ſhould have found much more difficult to attain.

Lyſimor, after ruminating for a conſiderable time, rung the bell for his footman; who, on his entrance, received for his firſt command to ſhut the door: that done, he made no ſcruple to inform the fellow, who I ſoon found was in all his ſecrets, of the concern he was in for Iſabinda; the promiſe he had given of taking her under his protection; and the vexation he was in to find a proper lodging for her, ſo that his father might not ſuſpect he had any hand in her eſcape, nor her own be able to diſcover where ſhe was concealed.

To this the man, after a pretty long pauſe, replied, that he had a ſiſter who was a widow, and lived in a very remote and obſcure part of the town; that her houſe was clean, though ſmall; that her family conſiſted only of herſelf, an infant ſucking at her breaſt, and a country girl who did the buſineſs of a ſervant: and added, that if the lady could content herſelf with ſo mean an abode, he was certain ſhe might remain there concealed as long as ſhe ſhould think fit.

Lyſimor ſeemed overjoyed at this propoſal, and bid him go directly to his ſiſter, apprize her of the affair as far as it was neceſſary, and give her a ſtrict charge to prepare every thing in as decent a manner as ſhe could for the reception of her fair gueſt. The fellow went to execute his commiſſion, and I ſlid ſoftly round the room till I got to the door, and followed him, but not to the place where he was going; for having already found, by the diſcourſe he had with his maſter, the name and ſituation of the ſtreet, I had no buſineſs to take ſo long a walk, till ſomething more material excited my curioſity.

Lyſimor himſelf, however, was not more

more punctual to the time appointed by Isabinda, than I was to know the issue of this adventure. It wanted some minutes of twelve when I arrived at the corner of the square, and had but just posted myself under a lamp, when I saw Lysimor come muffled up in his cloak, and attended by his servant. We had not waited above a quarter of an hour, before we saw Isabinda steal out of her father's house, with a bundle under her arm almost as big as herself. Lysimor, perceiving how she was loaded, made his man hasten to ease her of it; after which she rather flew than ran into the arms of her deliverer, for so she called him; adding—'Oh, can you pardon the trouble 'I have given you!' To which he replied—'Call not that a trouble which 'I shall always look upon as the greatest 'happiness of my life.' I could hear distinctly little more of what they said to each other, the footman being between us. They walked very fast through the square, and down a street which turned from it, where a hackney-coach waited to receive them; and, as soon as they were entered, drove away with all imaginable speed. I had neither the will nor the power to pursue them, so returned home, to reflect at leisure on the passages I had been witness of.

CHAP. IV.

CONTAINS SOME MORE INTERESTING PARTICULARS OF THIS ADVENTURE; AND SHEWS THAT PEOPLE, BY FLYING FROM ONE THING WHICH THEY THINK WOULD BE A MISFORTUNE, OFTEN RUN INTO OTHERS OF A NATURE MORE TO BE DREADED.

MUCH as I had condemned Flaminio for his bigotted superstition, I could not wholly absolve Isabinda for the step she had taken. I wondered not that she was fearful of being forced into a state of life which few ladies of her years would chuse, but I wondered that she was not also fearful of putting herself into the power of a man who loved her, and whom she passionately loved. She must certainly either not have considered the dangers to which she might be exposed, or have depended too much on the strength of her own virtue. Besides, she could not be so ignorant as not to know that no woman can be made a nun, any more than she can be made a wife, against her will; and a less share of courage than she shewed in this midnight elopement, would have enabled her, on her entrance within the walls of the convent, to declare she had neither call nor inclination to receive the veil; on which neither the abbess, nor the bishop of the diocese, could have consented to her admission into holy orders. It is true, that her father might have confined her there a pensioner as long as he thought fit; but as this would not have answered his end in devoting her to the service of the church, by way of propitiation for his offences, there is no doubt to be made but that he would shortly have recalled her home; and perhaps, too, been convinced of his folly in attempting a thing so absurd in itself, as well as cruel to his daughter.

I am sensible, that many of my fair young readers will be apt to quarrel with me for my animadversions on Isabinda's conduct in this point, and cry out, if they were in her place they would do the same. It is very likely, indeed, that they would do so; and full as likely that they would meet with something to make them heartily repent of their inadvertency. There are others again, who will say, that they can have no compassion for whatever misfortunes may befal a girl who thus rashly throws herself under the protection of a man not akin to her: but I believe the number of those who are so hard-hearted will be very few; except some professed prudes, who exclaim violently against the least misconduct in publick, yet make no scruple of giving themselves the greatest loose in private.

But to return to the melancholy detail I am now upon. Having little to do with my time the next morning, I went to the house where I knew Isabinda was placed for shelter from her father's power. I gained an easy access, the door being open, as is generally the custom in mean houses. On my going up stairs, I found the unhappy beauty sitting in a very pensive posture, leaning her head against the corner of a cupboard, which I suppose served her for a larder; for I saw a small slice of butter and the remains of a half-penny roll lying. Frequent sighs issued from her breast, and some tears fell.

fell. Strange indeed would it have been, if a young lady, bred up in all the delicacies of life, could have worn a chearful countenance in such a change of situation; though, as the fellow had told his master, the room, and all the furniture it contained, was extremely clean, and shewed the housewifery of the owner, yet nothing could have more the face of poverty.

She seemed buried, as it were, in a profound contemplation; when the sound of somebody coming up the stairs made her raise her head a little, probably guessing from whom it proceeded. Lysimor presently appeared; and, on sight of him, a dawn of joy overspread her face. He ran to her, embraced her, and said the most tender things, intermixed with some expressions of concern, that the necessity of her being concealed left him not the power of providing a place for her more suitable to her merit and his affection. She could not now restrain her tears from flowing, which occasioned the following discourse:

Isabinda. Ah, Lysimor, I beg you will not talk to me in this manner; but rather use all your rhetorick to assist my weak endeavours to suit my humour to my condition! To be easy, I must forget what I have been, and wish to be no more than what I am.

Lysimor You never can be other than the most charming and most worthy of your sex.

Isabinda. Alas! I have no longer any pretence to compliments like these: I have now, as the poet says—

'No name, no family to call my own;
'But am an outcast, and a vagabond.'

As such I must hereafter live: and, that I may lose all remembrance of my former state, I have brought away my jewels and best apparel, for no other end than to dispose of them, and purchase others more conformable to my future circumstances.

Lysimor. Torture not thus a heart to which you are dearer than the vital blood that gives it motion! Can you believe I would suffer you to part with any of those appendages to your birth and rank? No, I would rather add to them. Do you not know that my whole fortune is at your devotion?

Isabinda. I must not, Sir, accept it,

Lysimor. Why not accept? too scrupulous Isabinda! But if you are above receiving the tribute of a lover, command whatever you may have occasion for on the score of a brother. My dear Adario, I know, will readily discharge the obligation.

Isabinda. I am sure he will; and on that condition, if Providence presents no other way for my support, will not refuse your generous offer.

Lysimor. Think then no more of submitting to any thing unworthy of your character. I flatter myself our misfortunes are not of long continuance; that your father will repent him of his cruel resolution, and mine forget the affront offered to his family, and we may yet be happy.

Isabinda. I dare not entertain a hope so distant.

Lysimor. You know not how prophetick my passion may prove. In the mean time, I should be glad, methinks, to be made acquainted with the motive that has caused this sudden revolution in our fate.

Isabinda. Though I am loth to expose the secrets, I might say the follies, of a father, yet I cannot refuse you.

Perceiving now that she was preparing herself to make a detail of those particulars I had heard before, and in a preceding chapter have communicated to the reader, I would not stay to hear a second repetition, but came away, and left the lovers together for that time. From thence I went to the house of Flaminio; where I found, as I expected, every thing in distraction: messengers running backwards and forwards; some returning from their fruitless search of Isabinda, others going to places where they had not before been sent; and the old gentleman himself so overcome with rage and grief, that he was scarce capable of giving the necessary orders for what he most desired.

Some other adventures, which I shall hereafter publish, then falling in my way, I had no leisure to make a second visit to Isabinda for the space of near three weeks. But how shall I express my concern for that unfortunate young lady, when, on my going thither, I found her in the manner I did, and that all the apprehensions I had been in on her account had but too solid a foundation! When wild desire presides over the heart of man, what is his boasted honour? what

what his virtue? what his regard for the happineſs and reputation of the woman he pretends to love?—all ſhadowy nothings, vain ideas, which, like the Sybil's words wrote on the leaves of trees, are blown off and ſcattered through the air with every guſt of paſſion. But to proceed.

No obſtruction being in my way, I paſſed directly up to Iſabinda's chamber; but finding the door faſt locked, began to imagine ſhe was either removed, or had ventured out to take the air; and was going down again, when I was prevented by the murmuring ſound of perſons talking within. I then put my ear cloſe to the key-hole, and eaſily knew the voices to be thoſe of Lyſimor and Iſabinda; on which I reſolved to wait till the door ſhould be opened, and in about three or four minutes after the woman of the houſe came up with two diſhes of chocolate and ſome biſcuits on a plate. She had the key in her pocket, and immediately gave entrance to me as well as herſelf. It was now more than paſt mid-day, yet Iſabinda had not left her bed. Lyſimor was ſitting on the ſide of it, as lately riſen; having both his feet on a chair, without either ſhoes or ſlippers. I was a little ſurprized at ſeeing him in this poſture; till the chocolate being ſerved, he ſaid to the woman—

Lyſimor. Has Jeffery prepared my boots as I directed laſt night?

Woman. Yes, an pleaſe your honour. He has ſo beſplaſhed them, and made the horſes heels ſo dirty, that one would ſwear they had come a journey of twenty miles this morning.

Lyſimor. That's right. It would have been ridiculous, after telling my father that I was gone a hunting, to have come home as clean as out of a lady's bedchamber. But go, and bid Jeffery bring the boots.

Lyſimor ſpoke this with a very gay air, but Iſabinda hung down her head; and, on the fellow's coming in, hid her face behind the curtain, nor uttered a ſyllable while he was in the room, which was no longer than to equip his maſter for departure. Lyſimor was no ſooner ready, and his ſervant withdrawn, than he approached the bed, and began to take his leave of Iſabinda, with a very tender embrace, accompanied with ſome ſoft words. She made no other reply, for a conſiderable time, than returning his careſſes; but at laſt broke out into theſe expreſſions—

Iſabinda. Ah, Lyſimor, ſhould you forget your vows, deſpiſe the conqueſt you have gained, and leave me to lament my eaſy faith, how miſerable, how abandoned beyond the power of words to expreſs, would be the condition of your Iſabinda!

Lyſimor. Unkind and cauſeleſs apprehenſion! My deareſt love, let not the thoughts of ſuch impoſſibilities diſturb you. Could I be ungrateful, after being made happy in this proof of your affection, I muſt be loſt to all ſenſe of honour, unworthy of the name of man, and even to breathe vital air.

Iſabinda. Well, then, I muſt, I will believe you; nor repent what I have done. But tell me, when will you come again?

Lyſimor. To-morrow, if I can; if not, you may depend on ſeeing me next day. Be aſſured, that every hour will ſeem an age to me till I ſee you. Farewel, thou ſofteſt, loveliеſt of thy ſex!

He went; but, as I then fancied, with more the air of triumph than of real tenderneſs or reſpect in his deportment. Iſabinda then called for the woman of the houſe to aſſiſt her in riſing; and I left the place, with a heart full of forebodings for her future fate: indeed I truly pitied the ruined maid; and wiſhed ſhe never might have occaſion to cry out, with Monimia in the tragedy—

'————————How often has he ſworn
'Nature ſhould change, the ſun and ſtars grow dark,
'Ere he would falſify his vows to me?
'Make haſte confuſion, then—ſun, loſe thy light,
'And ſtars drop down with ſorrow to the earth,
'For he is falſe—
'Falſe as the winds, the water, or the weather;
'Cruel as tigers o'er their trembling prey!
'I feel him in my breaſt! he tears my heart!
'And at each ſigh he drinks the guſhing blood!'

My curioſity having received this painful ſatisfaction, I imagined not that any farther diſcoveries, at leaſt that would be material enough to compenſate for the trouble I ſhould take, could be made in relation to theſe lovers; and therefore thought of returning no more, either to the

the apartment of Isabinda, or to the house of Lysimor. I should, indeed, have endeavoured to lose all memory of this unhappy transaction, if the talk of the town had not continually reminded me of it. Every one was full of Isabinda's flight. Few, if any, besides myself, were acquainted with the motive of it; and none knew to wha. place she was retired: and the perfect ignorance people were in on both these scores, occasioned various conjectures, and rendered the wonder much more lasting than otherwise it would have been.

But this was not all. Flaminio, pierced through with grief and indignation on not being able to find his daughter, and perhaps, too, with some mixture of remorse for the cause he had given her to leave him, fell into a violent fever, of which he died, after languishing some days. By his last testament he bequeathed to his daughter, if ever she should be found, the sum of three thousand pounds; in order, as he caused it to be expressed in the writing, to keep her above the contempt of the world; and likewise, by the smallness of the portion, to keep her in perpetual remembrance of the false step she had taken.

Soon after this, I received certain intelligence, that Lysimor was making his publick addresses to a fine young lady with a very large fortune. I doubted not but this was that same Emilia whom I had heard his father so strongly recommend, and was fired with the utmost impatience to see how poor Isabinda would behave on both these events. Accordingly, I went once more to the house where she had been concealed; but, to my great disappointment, found she was gone from thence; nor could all my search, joined with the assistance of my Invisible Belt, enable me, for some time, to discover to what part of the town or country she was removed.

CHAP. V.

COMPLEATS THE CATASTROPHE OF THIS TRULY TRAGICAL ADVENTURE.

ADARIO had proceeded on his travels no farther than Paris, when the account of his father's death obliged him to return to England with all possible expedition. Soon after his coming, I made an unseen visit at his house, where I found him, not like most young heirs, exulting in being the entire master of himself and fortune, and contriving in what kind of luxuries he should dispose of both, but full of the most sincere and unaffected sorrow. He was, indeed, one of those few sons who look on the possession of an estate as no equivalent for the loss of a good parent, such as Flaminio ever had been to both his children, till that fatal caprice, which drove his daughter from his protection, had brought on her undoing, his own death, and was the source of other calamities of a yet more dreadful nature, as will presently appear.

The story of Isabinda's elopement, and the uncertainty what fate had since attended her, was a matter of great affliction to this young gentleman. He loved his sister with a very tender affection, and had hoped to have seen her, by this time, married to Lysimor: but as his esteem for that friend was no way lessened by the match being broke off; and besides, expecting to be better informed by him of the particulars of that affair, than he could be by any other person, he was impatient to see him, and I found had sent him that morning notice of his arrival; for a letter, in answer to his message, was delivered to him while I was there, the contents whereof were these—

'TO ADARIO.

'SIR,

'I Congratulate you on your safe return 'to England and should gladly have 'paid my compliments to you in per'son, if that honour had not been pro'hibited by an authority which I must 'not presume to contend with. My 'father, resenting the affront given by 'yours, which you cannot but have 'been informed of, has forbid me, 'under the penalty of his eternal dis'pleasure, to converse with any of your 'family. He was at home when your 'servant came, and heard the message 'you sent delivered to me; on which 'he repeated his former injunction, and 'exacted a solemn oath of my obedience 'to it. You will therefore pardon my 'not waiting on you, and believe, that 'the

'the discontinuance of our acquaintance 'will always be extremely regretted by 'him who is, with all due respect, Sir, 'your most obedient servant,

'LYSIMOR.'

'Alas!' cried Adario, throwing the letter from him as soon as he had read it, 'how cold, how distant, is the air of 'this letter! how different from those I 'have been accustomed to receive from 'Lysimor! I find that, by one un-'lucky accident, I have at once lost a fa-'ther, a sister, and a friend.'

I thought I had now entirely done with this family; for, as Isabinda was not to be found, I expected nothing of consequence could be learned either at the house of Lysimor or Adario, so intended to make no more visits to those gentlemen. Chance, however, about five months afterwards, changed my resolution, and threw something in my way which no diligence of my own could ever have attained. As I was going one morning on my invisible progression, I happened to pass by the house of Adario. He was at the door, and about to step into a hackney-coach which waited for him; when a fellow, who had the appearance of a groom, came running towards him, almost breathless with the haste he had made, and cried out—'Oh, 'Sir, I have joyful news for you! I 'beg your honour will turn back to 'hear it.' These words revived my former curiosity; and finding Adario complied with his servant's request, I followed them into the parlour, and was witness of the ensuing discourse.

Groom. Oh, Sir, I have seen my young lady!

Adario. What young lady? Not my sister!

Groom. Yes, indeed, Sir! As I was going to fetch the horse your honour sent me for, I saw Madam Isabinda looking through the window of a house at the corner of a little lane just by Islington.

Adario. Are you sure it was she?

Groom. As sure as I am alive, Sir! Though, poor lady, she is very much altered; very thin, and pale.

Adario. I fancy you are mistaken. If my sister were so near London, she would certainly either have sent or come, to claim the legacy left her by my father, which I suppose she has need enough of by this time. I am resolved to be convinced, notwithstanding. Do you think she lodges there?

Groom. Yes, Sir; for she was all undressed, and looked as if she was just out of bed.

Adario. And can you know the house again?

Groom. O yes, Sir; I took particular notice of it.

Adario. Well, then, I will only send an excuse to the gentleman I was to meet this morning, and go directly. You shall get upon the coach-box, and order the fellow where to drive; but let him stop short of the house, that my sister, if it be she, may not be apprized of my coming before she sees me.

While Adario was calling one of his footmen to send on the message he had mentioned, I ran to the end of the street, went into a narrow dark passage, and plucked off my Belt; then having recovered the appearance of what I am, a real substance, I popped into an empty coach that had just set down a fare, and bid the driver to follow wherever that went which was standing at Adario's door. Both the coaches drove with such speed, that we soon reached the end of our little journey. I quitted my vehicle the moment I saw the other preparing to stop; but though I made all imaginable haste to put on my Belt, I could scarce have regained my invisibility time enough to have entered with Adario, if he had not met with an obstruction in his passage from the woman of the house, who at first denied she had any lady lodged with her; then said, she had none of the name he enquired for: on which he replied with some heat, that the lady might have reasons for concealing her real name. 'But tell her,' cried he, 'that mine is Adario; that I 'am her brother, and must needs see 'her.' On this she seemed somewhat more compliable, and said she would go and acquaint the lady. Accordingly she went up stairs; but Adario was too impatient to wait her return, and followed her directly: I was but one step behind him; and we were both in the room before she could deliver any part of her message.

Isabinda was adjusting something about her dress before a looking-glass; but happening to turn her head just as Adario was within the door, shrieked out—'Oh 'heavens, my brother!' and with these words

words fell back in her chair. The woman went to fetch some water. Adario ran to support the fainting fair; but happening to cast his eyes upon the table, saw a letter lying there, the superscription of which was in Isabinda's hand, and addressed to Lysimor. Emotions more strong than pity, at this time, made him quit his sister to examine the contents of this surprizing billet, which were these—

'MY DEAR, DEAR LYSIMOR!

'FOR such you are, and ever must 'be, to my fond doating heart; 'though I have too much cause to fear 'the tender epithet is now no longer 'pleasing to you. Ah, Lysimor, how 'sad is the reverse of my condition! 'From seeing you twice or thrice every 'week, I now see you not once a month; 'and even then how cold is your be-'haviour! how short your visits! How 'cruel is this to one who neither can, 'nor wishes, to enjoy any conversation 'but yours! For pity's sake, if not 'for love, render my life more easy, at 'least for the present, whatever you do 'hereafter. The infant I carry within 'me sympathizes in it's mother's an-'guish, and continually upbraids you 'with convulsive heavings. Even if 'your vows of everlasting constancy 'should be forgot, let some consider-'ation of the unborn innocent, the 'pledge of our once mutual loves, 'oblige you to treat with less indif-'ference it's unhappy mother,

'The ruined ISABINDA.

'P. S. I can no longer bear your 'absence, else would not have 'troubled you with this com-'plaint.'

What a letter was this to fall into a brother's hands! Never did I see a man in such distraction. 'Villain! villain 'Lysimor!—Wretched Isabinda!' cried he out. Then turning towards her—'But there needed not this proof in thy 'own hand,' added he; 'thy shame is 'but too visible.' Isabinda, who by the assistance of the woman was now recovered from her swoon, but not enough to hear what her brother said, threw herself at his feet, and, with streaming eyes, addressed him in these terms—

Isabinda. Oh, Sir! can you forgive my concealing myself from you?

Adario. Would to God that there were equal reason to forgive the cause!

Isabinda at this instant turning up her eyes, beheld her letter in his hand, and cried out, with the greatest vehemence—'I am now undone, indeed! irrecovera-'bly lost to all hope of pardon or pity! '—my shame exposed to him from 'whom, of all the world, it should have 'been most hid!'

Adario Rise, sister, and cease these unavailing exclamations. Your shame will receive no addition by my knowledge of it; rather, perhaps, be remedied. But tell, and tell me truly, has Lysimor ever promised marriage to you?

Isabinda. A thousand and a thousand times, and bound himself to the performance by the most solemn imprecations.

Adario. Then he is doubly a villain! and if you believe him, you are doubly deceived. He courts another woman.

Isabinda. Indeed, of late, I have suspected this, and often accused him of it, and he as often has forsworn it.

Adario. Mere words of course! But say, have you no testimony, under his own hand, of the promise he made you, either by letter or by formal obligation?

Isabinda. None, none, alas!

On this Adario bit his lips, walked two or three times about the room, then paused, and seemed as if debating within himself in what manner he should behave: at last sat down; and taking the still weeping Isabinda by the hand, endeavoured to assuage her grief.

Adario. Come, Isabinda, dry your tears. Love and credulity have seduced your innocence. Great has been your fault; but yet I cannot forget you are my sister, and that you have no friend but me on whom you can depend for consolation. What is past cannot be recalled, but it may be redressed. Be assured you shall one way or other have justice.

Isabinda. Ah, Sir, I beseech you proceed not to extremities! If by my crime you should be involved in any danger or perplexities, it would sink me quite.

Adario. I hope there will be no occasion. Lysimor was once a man of honour, and may yet return to his first principles.

principles. On this you may rely, that I shall do nothing rashly, nor inconsistent with your interest and reputation.

After this, they fell into some discourse concerning the strange resolution Flaminio had taken of sending her to a monastery; the particulars of which the reader being already acquainted with, I shall pass over in silence. When Adario took his leave, he did it with a great deal of affection: but I was much divided in my thoughts, whether I should stay with Isabinda, or follow Adario home; the latter seemed most flattering to my curiosity, as, by many tokens, I perceived he had something in his head which he was impatient to put in execution. I was not deceived in my conjectures: Adario was no sooner in his own house, than he flew to his bureau; and, without taking any time for deliberation, wrote this epistle to Lysimor—

'SIR,

'CONSCIOUS guilt, without those 'commands you seem so zealous 'in observing, might well make you 'avoid the presence of a person you 'have so greatly injured. When I recommended you to my sister, it was in 'order to become her protector, not her 'undoer. How cruelly you have abused 'this confidence, let your own heart remind you! But I have some hope, 'how much soever appearances at present are to the contrary, you still intend to do justice to your promises to 'Isabinda, and the claim she has to 'your affection. I need not tell you, 'that you can repair the misfortune you 'have brought upon her no otherwise 'than by an honourable marriage: I 'am ready to fulfil the agreement made 'between our fathers on that score, 'and give my sister the sum of eight 'thousand pounds, as was then stipulated. If you comply with this proposal, I shall be glad to see you at her 'lodgings, there to settle every thing: 'if not, shall expect you will meet me 'in another place; and give me the satisfaction which every gentleman has 'a right to demand when he finds himself ill used. I attend your determination; and am, &c.

'ADARIO.'

He sent this by one of his servants, with a charge to give it into Lysimor's own hands, and wait his answer. After which, being told dinner was ready, he went down, and placed himself at the table, though I believe with very little appetite; for his countenance had upon it all the marks of the greatest inward disturbance, which was not at all lessened when his man returned with this from Lysimor—

'SIR,

'SINCE I find you are so well ac-'quainted with a secret which, 'for the lady's sake, I could wish had 'been inviolably kept, I think myself obliged to deal sincerely with you 'on the occasion. You may be assured I can behave to no woman, 'much less your sister, otherwise than 'becomes a man of honour: but marriage is a thing quite out of the question, as I am certain my father never 'would consent to it. If any promises 'on that account ever escaped my lips, 'I remember nothing of them, and 'could make them with no other view 'than to give her modesty an excuse for 'yielding. I am sorry, however, for 'what has happened: but you cannot 'be insensible of the frailties of flesh 'and blood; and must know, as well 'as I, that when two young people, 'who like each other, are much alone 'together, such accidents will naturally occur. The resentment you 'threaten, on my non-compliance with 'your proposal, appears therefore to me 'a little unreasonable; I shall, notwithstanding, be ready to give you the 'satisfaction you desire, at any time or 'place you shall appoint. Yours, &c.

'LYSIMOR.'

All the blood now seemed to have forsook the heart of Adario to rush into his face: his lips trembled, his very eyeballs started with excess of passion. He hesitated not a moment what he should do; but, in this tempest of his mind, wrote as follows to Lysimor—

'SIR,

'I Want words to return the insolence 'and ingratitude of your reply; 'but have a sword at your service, 'which I expect you will try the metal 'of to-morrow morning about seven, 'in the field behind Montague House. 'As the dispute between us will ad-

'mit of no witneſſes, pray come 'alone to

'ADARIO.'

Though I knew my own dinner waited for me, I could not prevail on myſelf to go home, till Adario had diſpatched this billet to Lyſimor, and the ſervant who carried it was come back from that gentleman with a ſmall ſlip of paper tied up, containing only theſe words—

'SIR,

'YOU may depend that I ſhall not 'fail to meet you as deſired.

'LYSIMOR.'

I now quitted the houſe of Adario; but, after having related the pains I had already taken, I believe nobody will ſuppoſe I neglected going the next morning to the field, to ſee the iſſue of this combat. I found Adario was there firſt; but though he waited only a very few minutes for Lyſimor, his impatience made him not forbear ſaluting him in this manner.

Adario. I began to think, Lyſimor, that the ſhame of having done a baſe action would not ſuffer you to defend it.

Lyſimor. Sir, whatever I dare do, I always dare defend.

Adario. Then, Sir, this is no time for words.

Lyſimor. I am ready for you, Sir.

Here ceaſed all farther ſpeech between them, and on the part of Lyſimor for ever. On the ſecond puſh, Adario ran him quite through the body; he fell that inſtant, and expired with only a ſingle groan. His ſucceſsful antagoniſt approached the body; and finding life was totally extinguiſhed, gave a ſigh or two to the memory of a man he once had called his friend, then made the beſt of his way home, in order to provide for his own ſecurity, which the likelihood there was of the challenge he had ſent to the deceaſed being found rendered highly neceſſary.

The meaſures he took, indeed, were very prudent. He ſent immediately to hire a poſt chaiſe, which was to wait for him in a ſtreet he mentioned, at ſome diſtance from that in which he lived; carried no baggage with him, but ordered a ſervant to follow him with it to Paris; ſhall no longer at his own houſe ſtay to write two ſhort letters; the one to a gentleman who had been one of the executors of his father's will, which being only on family affairs, need not be here inſerted; the other was to his ſiſter Iſabinda, and contained theſe lines—

'SISTER,

'FAILING to repair your wrongs 'by the way I hoped, I have re'venged them by the death of your ſe'ducer; for which I am obliged this 'moment to leave my native country, 'perhaps for ever. I have done what 'the honour of our family exacted from 'me. It belongs to you to regulate 'your future conduct, ſo as to atone, 'in ſome meaſure, for the errors of the 'paſt. To enable you to do this, you 'ought to keep in eternal remembrance, 'that the follies of your fatal paſſion 'have not only brought the object of it 'to an untimely grave, but alſo drove 'from all the ſocial joys of life, into 'an irkſome baniſhment in a foreign 'land, him who might have been hap'py, if he had not been your brother,

'ADARIO.'

Thinking, perhaps, he had been ſomewhat too ſevere in the above, he added this poſtſcript, by way of cordial—

'P. S. I ſhall conſtantly write to 'Mr. D——n: he will be able to 'inform you how to direct for me. 'You may be aſſured I ſhall re'ceive with pleaſure any letters 'that bring me an account of your 'welfare; and, in ſpite of all that 'has happened, do you every ſer'vice in my power.'

After having ſent this by the groom who had firſt diſcovered the place of her abode, and given ſome neceſſary inſtructions to his other ſervants, he hurried away to meet the poſt-chaiſe, and I ſaw him no more. As I had truly pitied Iſabinda, I could not forbear going to ſee in what manner ſhe ſupported this laſt dreadful accident. On my entrance, ſhe was in bed, and ſurrounded by women and phyſicians. I gathered from their diſcourſe, that the ſurprize and grief ſhe had been in had cauſed an abortion, accompanied with fits of a very dangerous nature. On my next viſit, however, I found her youth, and the ſtrength of her conſtitution, had got the better of her diſeaſe; but though the pains

pains of her body were removed, those of her mind still remained: she was extremely melancholy, had a thorough contempt for the world; and the thoughts of a monastery were now so far from being shocking to her, that she resolved to fly to one, as the only asylum from censure and from care. Accordingly, as I was afterwards informed, she went, on the re-establishment of her health, to Paris, and entered herself into the society of Benedictine Nuns; where I doubt not but she often sees her brother through the grate, as he still continues to reside in that city.

I have now finished all the account I am able to give of this melancholy transaction; in which the justice of Providence seems to me to be distinguished in somewhat of a peculiar manner; and may serve as a warning to our gay, amorous sparks, not to become the seducers of unwary innocence; especially if they will be at the trouble of reflecting, how the perfidy and ingratitude of Flaminio to the believing Harriot was afterwards retorted on his own darling daughter.

CHAP. VI.

GIVES THE ACCOUNT OF AN OCCURRENCE NO LESS REMARKABLE THAN ENTERTAINING; AND SHEWS, THAT THERE IS SCARCE ANY DIFFICULTY SO GREAT, BUT IT MAY BE GOT OVER BY THE HELP OF A READY INVENTION, IF PROPERLY EXERTED.

TO make some atonement for my last melancholy recital, to those of my readers who may not care to have their heads filled with subjects of too serious a nature, I shall now present them with one more likely to put in motion the risible muscles of the face, than to extort the falling of unwilling tears.

A gentleman, whom I shall call Conrade, had lived to the age of sixty without ever testifying the least inclination to marriage. He had been a man of pleasure in his youth; and probably the too great success he then found among the fair, had deterred him from entering into an honourable engagement with any of the sex: but there is no accounting for change of sentiment in this point; an accident sometimes puts that into our heads which before we never thought of, or perhaps had an aversion to, as it fell out in the case of the gentleman I am speaking of. A long friendship had subsisted between him and Murcio; a gentleman who, though not so far advanced in years, had made a better use of his time; had been married, and was the father of three fine daughters, two of whom had always lived with him; but the youngest, after the death of his wife, was taken from him, and brought up under the care of an aunt in the country. The eldest of these ladies being now about to be disposed of in marriage, Conrade received and accepted an invitation to the wedding. Melanthe, sister to the bride, was a fine sparkling girl of nineteen; but whether it were that she appeared in reality more lovely than usual, or that the mirth and pleasantries common at such solemnities rekindled the long-smothered embers of amorous desire in the breast of Conrade, so it was, that he, who had been in the company of this young lady without ever taking any notice of her charms, all at once became extremely smitten with them; insomuch, that he resolved to acquaint her father with his new passion, and ask his consent to make his addresses to her; which he did not at all despair of obtaining on the terms he intended to propose.

Murcio had a pretty country-house at a village about ten or twelve miles up the river; where he constantly went every Saturday, and staid till Monday or Tuesday, and sometimes longer. It was while he was in this retirement, that Conrade chose to communicate to him the business he had in his head: accordingly he went thither, and found him entirely alone; Melanthe having been prevented from going, as she was accustomed to do, by a violent fit of the tooth-ache. This our old lover looked upon as a good omen, being desirous to engage the father in favour of his passion before he made any declaration to the daughter. He began with saying, that he now repented having lived so long a batchelor; that having a very large estate, he should be glad of an heir to enjoy it; that if he could prevail on a young lady whom he liked to marry him, he would endeavour to atone for the want of youth by all the indulgences in the power of a fond husband; and having thus prepared the way, told him, that if he thought proper to bestow

ſtow Melanthe upon him, he would deſire no other fortune than her perſon; yet would ſettle a dowry upon her ſuperior to what might be expected if ſhe brought him ten thouſand pounds.

It is not to be imagined with what greedineſs Murcio ſwallowed this propoſal: he did not even affect to heſitate, or make the leaſt demur at accepting it; on the contrary, he replied, that nothing could afford him a greater ſatisfaction than ſuch an alliance and that he doubted not but Melanthe would receive the honour he intended her as a woman who knew her own intereſt and happineſs. Both parties being equally tranſported, every thing was immediately agreed upon between them: but Murcio not being able to aſſure himſelf that his daughter would ſo readily comply as he had made the lover hope ſhe would; and fearing that, if ſhe ſhould give the old gentleman a rebuff on his firſt onſet, it might diſcourage him from making a ſecond, and perhaps overturn the whole affair, reſolved not to hazard the loſs of ſo advantageous a match by leaving it to her own choice, but ſent a ſpecial meſſenger to her with a letter, the contents whereof are theſe—

'DEAR CHILD,

'MY worthy friend Conrade has 'taken a great liking to you, 'and will make you his wife on ſuch 'terms as would but little prove the 'paternal affection I have for you to re'ject. Be not you leſs thankful to 'Heaven for ſo unhoped a bleſſing than 'I am; nor, on any fooliſh pretences, 'either ſlight, or ſeem to ſlight, the 'good preſented to you. If you con'ſider the vaſt advantages of this 'match, a diſparity of years can be no 'objection. I ſay thus much, becauſe 'I would convince your reaſon, not en'force your action; for I ſhould be 'ſorry to find myſelf oblige! to make 'uſe of the authority I have over you 'in a thing which you ought, and I 'hope will, receive with the ſame ſatis'faction I propoſe it. Know, however, 'that I have already agreed on every 'thing for your marriage; that your 'future huſband is now here, and we 'ſhall both be in town either to-mor'row or the enſuing day. I ſend this 'on purpoſe to prepare you to behave 'towards him in a proper manner, 'and as it is the abſolute command 'of him who is your affectionate fa'ther,

'MURCIO.'

I ſtood behind Melanthe's chair while ſhe was reading this epiſtle, and never did I ſee a poor young creature in ſuch agitations. Scarce had ſhe come to the end of the firſt period, before ſhe cried out—'His wife! his wife! What 'terms can the old creature propoſe 'to compenſate for the odious title 'of wife to ſuch a wretch!' Then going a little farther—'Juſtly, indeed,' ſaid ſhe, 'does my father ſuſpect my 'obedience in this point; death itſelf 'would not be ſo dreadful to me as 'compliance.' The more ſhe proceeded, the higher her diſtraction grew. 'What! fix my doom at once!' raved ſhe out; 'at once reſolve to cut me off 'from all the joys of life, and condemn 'me to everlaſting miſery! Is this a 'parent's love! Oh, 'tis moſt cruel, 'moſt unnatural!' I know not to what extravagances ſhe might have been hurried, by the ſudden ruſh of grief and deſpair, if tears now had not afforded their relief; but though they a little ſoftened the aſperity of her paſſion, they had not the power to ſubdue it: her tongue, indeed, ceaſed from exclaiming againſt her fate; but the agonies of her countenance diſcovered how much ſhe inwardly regretted it. While ſhe was in this diſtreſsful and pity-moving ſituation, the gay, the lively Florimel, came in. This young lady was the moſt beloved and intimate companion that Melanthe had; ſhe ſaw her almoſt every day, and always entered without ceremony. She ſeemed a little ſurprized, at firſt ſight, to find her thus; but immediately recovering herſelf, approached her with her accuſtomed ſprightlineſs.

Florimel. Heyday, Melan hel what, in the name of wonder, makes you in this pickle? Is your favourite ſquirrel dead? or has any accident happened to your laſt new petit-en-l'air? or what other misfortune has befallen you?

Melanthe. O Florimel, what would I not give to be in thy condition!

Florimel. My condition! Why, what do you find to envy in my condition?

Melanthe. To have no father to controul your actions by an unreaſonable exertion of his authority.

Florimel. Why, truly, as you ſay, theſe old dads are troubleſom enough ſometimes;

ſometimes; yet, for all that, I ſhould be heartily glad mine were alive again. But pray, what has yours done to make you wiſh yourſelf an orphan?

Melanthe. Read that, and ſee if I have not cauſe.

In ſpeaking theſe words, ſhe pointed to her father's letter, which lay open on the table. Florimel took it up, and read it, as deſired. On examining the contents, ſhe could not help looking a little grave; but having finiſhed, reſumed the diſcourſe with her former vivacity.

Florimel. As ſure as I am alive, both theſe old gentlemen are crack-brained; the one in thinking of you for a wife, and the other in conſenting to give you ſuch a huſband.

Melanthe. One would, indeed, imagine they were not in their ſenſes.

Florimel. For my part I am ſo aſtoniſhed, that I can ſcarce believe I am awake. But what will you do?

Melanthe. Nothing.

Florimel. 'Nothing can come of 'nothing,' as King Lear ſays in the play. I am leſs ſurprized, however, at your ſtupidity in ſo perplexing a dilemma, than I am at the folly of thoſe who have involved you in it. Bleſs me! what can either your lover or father propoſe to themſelves by ſuch a diſproportionate alliance, but horns on the one ſide, and diſgrace to his family on the other?

Melanthe. No, Florimel, it ſhall never come to that; I will rather ſtarve or beg.

Florimel. Look'ye, my dear, neither ſtarving nor begging, as I take it, will agree with your conſtitution; ſomething elſe muſt be thought on.

Melanthe. What elſe?

Florimel. Do you think, that when your father comes to know what an implacable averſion you have to this match, he will not be prevailed upon to recal the promiſe he has made to Conrade?

Melanthe. Impoſſible! I know his temper too well to flatter myſelf with ſuch a hope. You might as well think to blow St. Paul's from it's foundation with a ſingle breath, as move him to recede from any thing he has once reſolved.

Florimel. Well, then, ſuppoſe ſome way could be contrived to make Conrade himſelf fly off? I have a project in my head that promiſes fair for it, if you will agree to join in the execution. It is this: you muſt admit a ſpruce young gallant to lie with you all night; Conrade muſt be informed of the amour, in ſuch a manner as to make him convinced of the truth of it; and the deuce is in him, if afterwards he inſiſts on marrying you.

Melanthe. Fie, Florimel! How can you be ſo cruel as to raillry my misfortunes?

Florimel. No, I proteſt I am as ſerious as a judge upon a criminal cauſe; and would have you make the experiment.

Melanthe. What, wouldſt thou have me turn proſtitute to avoid marriage!

Florimel. No ſuch matter. I will engage that the gallant I mean ſhall lie as harmleſs by your ſide as an infant.

Melanthe. Pr'ythee do not torture me with ſuch riddles.

Florimel. I ſhall preſently explain them. The gallant I am ſpeaking of, and who is to be your bedfellow, is no other than my own individual ſelf. I ſhall put on a ſuit of my brother's cloaths; and do not doubt but that, when I am dreſſed and equipped in all my accoutrements, I ſhall be a figure handſome enough to make an old man jealous.

Melanthe. Sure never was ſo wild a ſcheme! But yet I cannot conceive how it is to be conducted, or which way it can anſwer the end you propoſe by it.

Florimel. Lord, you are ſtrangely dull! or affect to be ſo; but I will ſhew you what I ſhall write to Conrade, and that may help to enlighten your underſtanding.

This witty lady waited not to hear what reply her friend would make, but ran to a deſk, and immediately wrote the following lines—

'TO HUGH CONRADE, ESQ.

'SIR.

'EVER ſince I heard of your intended marriage with Melanthe, 'I have been divided in my thoughts, 'whether the treachery of betraying a 'ſecret entruſted to me, or, by con-'cealing it, expoſe a gentleman of your 'character to the worſt of miſchiefs, 'would be the moſt diſhonourable ac-'tion. The latter conſideration has at 'laſt prevailed; and I think it my duty 'to inform you, that the lady you are 'about to make your wife has neither 'heart nor honour to beſtow upon you;

'both

'both are already disposed of to a per-
'son she thinks more agreeable to her
'years. Not content with the many
'private assignations she has with him
'abroad, she frequently makes pre-
'tences, when her father goes into the
'country, to be left at home; where
'her chambermaid, who is in the se-
'cret, admits this happy lover at mid-
'night, and lets him out early in the
'morning, before the other servants of
'the house are stirring. Murcio be-
'ing gone to *****, I am well assured
'it will be in your power to convince
'yourself of the certainty of this intel-
'ligence, by sending any one on whom
'you can depend to watch about the
'door, either for the entrance or exit of
'the favourite gallant. Act as you
'please, however. I have discharged
'the dictates of conscience in giving you
'this timely warning; and am,
'Your nameless servant.'

This she gave Melanthe to read; and, as soon as she had done, was going to ask her how she approved of the contrivance; when the other prevented her, by crying out—

Melanthe. Oh the wicked, lying letter! Dear Florimel, if this should be sent, and Conrade should shew it to my father, I believe he would kill me.

Florimel. 'Tis possible he may not shew it; but if he does, you have only to prepare yourself for a little scolding and swearing. The worst he can do is to turn you out of doors; and then, to use your own words, it can be but starving or begging.

Melanthe. Oh, but my reputation, Florimel!

Florimel. A fiddle of your reputation! Would you hazard nothing to avoid being racked, till death do you part, to such a lump of decayed mortality as Conrade? Besides, when the affair is all over, and you are once got free from this cursed engagement, it will be easy, by unravelling the plot, to clear your reputation, and reconcile you to your father into the bargain.

Melanthe. Oh, Florimel, if I was sure of that!

Florimel. Trust to Fortune. I will lay my life that, if you behave according to my directions, every thing will go right.

Melanthe. Well, then, tell me what I am to do.

Florimel. In the first place, when your father comes home, you must seem to be as well pleased with the match as he would have you be; and pretend that you are mightily in love with Conrade's estate, whatever you are with the man. Then, as for the old wretch himself, you have nothing to do but to simper and look silly when he makes his addresses, and tell him that you are all obedience to your father's will.

Melanthe. This is a hard task, and I am a very ill dissembler; I will try, however, what I can do. But, Florimel, there is one thing that neither you nor I, as yet, have thought upon: suppose Conrade should take it into his head to watch the door himself, and draw upon you in his passion?

Florimel. What if he does? I shall have a sword as well as he.

Melanthe. But not understand so well how to use it?

Florimel. I don't know that. But if I can't fight as well, I am sure I can run much better; so pray do not be under any concern on my account.

These fair friends parted not till the night was pretty far advanced; all which time was taken up with settling some farther particulars in relation to their design. Molly, the waiting-maid, was called in; and, after a vow of secrecy, entrusted with the whole affair. She seemed a good smart girl, highly proper for the business she was to be employed in, and readily promised her assistance. As I was very near as impatient as themselves for the success of this whimsical enterprize, I went every day to Murcio's house, and found that Melanthe acted the part she had been taught by Florimel so as to give the utmost satisfaction both to her father and lover; who now talked of nothing but to have the wedding solemnized as soon as the necessary preparations for it could be made.

Saturday being arrived, I made it my business to enquire whether Murcio was gone to his country-seat; and finding he was, and that Melanthe staid at home, concluded this was the day on which the first wheel of the machine was to be put in motion; therefore hurried away to the house of Conrade, where I luckily came time enough to see him receive the letter from Florimel. The wrinkle

wrinkles of his face were greatly agitated while he was reading this epistle. At first his eyelids extended themselves; and his brows were elated with surprize, then were contracted into a frown of anger. Sometimes a sneer of contempt and unbelief lengthened the furrows round his withered lips. But the attitude of longest duration, was a pensive hanging down of his head, accompanied with counting the hairs upon his little finger; out of which at last he started, and cried to himself—'Many 'reasons may be urged both for and 'against my giving credit to this story; 'but whether built upon truth or ma-'lice, I have no need to be at the pains 'of considering: the author has pointed 'out the means of being convinced, 'and I will take his counsel.'

As I could not be certain that he would continue in this resolution, and much less so, that if he did, what the event of it would be, I went by break of day the next morning, and posted myself over-against Murcio's house. In a few minutes after Conrade came, wrapped in a cloak; but stood more aloof, yet near enough to see every thing that passed. We had not waited above a quarter of an hour, before the door we watched was softly opened, and a well-dressed beau rushed out. Conrade advanced as fast as his gout would let him; in order, I suppose, to see the face of this invader of his hoped-for happiness: but the pretended gallant was too nimble for his pursuit; but dropped a piece of paper, as if by accident flirted out with his handkerchief. Conrade immediately snatched it up, and found it was a billet. The superscription seemed to have been torn off, but the contents were these—

'DEAREST OF YOUR SEX,

'MY father is gone into the country, 'and I have made an excuse to 'be left behind. Come at the usual 'hour, and Molly will admit you to 'the arms of

'Yours.'

I easily perceived that this was a second plot of the young ladies to corroborate the first; and it had all the effect they could wish; and was also productive of something else, which neither of them at that time imagined, as will appear in the succeeding chapter.

CHAP. VII.

IS A CONTINUANCE OF THIS MERRY HISTORY, WHICH PRESENTS SOMETHING AS LITTLE EXPECTED BY THE READER AS IT WAS BY THE PARTIES CONCERNED IN IT.

IT is not to be doubted but that Conrade, after having received this double confirmation of Melanthe's transgression, gave over all intentions of becoming her husband; yet, by what I could gather from his looks, and some expressions he let fall, the manner in which he should quit his pretensions was the occasion of a very great conflict in his mind. He was a good-natured man, and loth to accuse this young lady to her father; yet, to break off a match so far advanced, and which he had so earnestly solicited, without assigning any cause for the change of his resolution, he thought would not only make him appear ridiculous, but also put a final period to all conversation between him and his old friend; and he probably continued undetermined in this matter, till he found himself obliged to talk upon it to Murcio himself, who had appointed to come to town the next day in order to sign the marriage-writings. That gentleman was at home; and having expected him some hours before he came, began, in a pleasant manner, to reproach his tardiness; to which Conrade replied, very gravely—'I am indeed, Sir, some-'what beyond my time, yet, I believe, 'soon enough for the business which 'now brings me.' Murcio seemed much surprized on hearing him speak in this manner; and poor Melanthe, who was present, well knowing that this alteration in her lover's behaviour was the effect of the plot concerted between her and Florimel, trembled for the event, and was no less shocked at the thoughts how much her innocence suffered in his opinion.

It is uncertain what return Murcio would have made, for the other prevented him from speaking, by adding, to what he had said before, that he had something of a very extraordinary nature, and which required no witnesses, to communicate to him. On which he made a sign to Melanthe to

to leave the room; and she was no sooner withdrawn, than Conrade proceeded, though not without a good deal of hesitation, to declare himself in these terms—

Conrade. Dear Murcio, we have long been friends; and I should be heartily sorry that what I have to say should occasion a rupture between us. For my own part, there is no man living for whom I shall always preserve a greater esteem than for yourself.

Murcio. I cannot think, Sir, that you have any thing in your mind which should give me reason to regard you less.

Conrade. Reason is too frequently misled by passion. I know it by experience, and shall be glad to find yours is more strong; though, I confess, I have been to blame, and am sorry things have gone so far: but, Sir, I have considered that it is now too late in life for me to think of marriage, especially with so young a lady as Melanthe.

Murcio. This is an odd turn, indeed! Methinks, Sir, you should have considered this before you made any proposals of that sort, either to me or my daughter. A treaty of marriage, Sir, when concluded on and consented to by both parties, is a thing of too much consequence to be broke off by either, without putting the most gross affront upon the other.

Conrade. Not, Sir, when it can be proved that the consummation would be equally inconvenient for both.

Murcio As how for both? My daughter has never made the least objection.

Conrade. It may be so. Yet I am well assured she neither does, nor ever can, regard me with that affection which alone could make either me or herself happy in being united.

Murcio. A mere whim! a caprice of your own, founded only on the disparity of years! and I am amazed you should think of flying off from your engagement on so shallow a pretence.

Conrade. Perhaps I may have others. Suppose I know she loves another?

Murcio. Sir, I will suppose no such thing. She love another! No, Sir, she has been bred up in principles too virtuous, and is too modest, to place her affections on any one, till my commands, and the authority of the church, made it her duty to do so: and I must tell you, Sir, it is base in you to add to the ill usage you are about to give her, by traducing her reputation.

Conrade. I scorn the unmanly thought. Be assured I have proofs of what I say.

Murcio. Produce them, then.

Conrade. I will, since I find the justification of my own honour depends upon it. There, Sir; read that, and be convinced.

In speaking this, he gave Murcio the letter that had been sent by Florimel; which the other, after having carelessly perused, threw from him; and looking on Conrade with the utmost scorn, said to him—

Murcio. A notable proof, indeed! There are few people without some enemies: but this is a piece of scandal too gross, too stupid, and the invention too ill concerted to pass even on the most weak and credulous mind; and seems rather a poor, low contrivance, of your own, to evade fulfilling an engagement you have taken it into your head to repent of.

Conrade. You are free in your expressions, Sir; but I believe it will presently be my turn to retort that contempt you so unjustly treat me with. Do you know the hand-writing of your daughter?

Murcio. Yes, certainly I do.

Conrade. Then judge of the contents of this, and take shame to yourself for the injurious treatment you have given me.

The reader will easily imagine that it was Melanthe's little billet he now put into his hands; but no one can conceive, much less am I able to describe, the rage, the horror, the distraction that shook the whole frame of this astonished parent, on finding himself no longer able to refuse giving credit to so terrible a misfortune. 'Death and furies!' cried he. 'Infamous, abandoned wretch!' Then, after loading her with all the foulest names that language could afford, he turned to Conrade—'Pardon 'me, dear Conrade,' said he. 'Had 'an angel told me what you did, with-'out this cursed testimony, I should 'not have believed the story. But you 'shall have ample satisfaction: I'll turn 'this scandal to my family, this de-'ceiver both of you and me, out of 'my doors this moment; never own 'her, never see her more, but leave her 'to the miseries she merits!' He was running out of the room; and it is probable,

bable, in the first emotions of his passion, would have done as he had threatened, if Conrade had not withheld him; and partly by force, and partly by persuasion, made him sit down, while he reasoned with him in this manner—

Conrade. Dear Murcio, compose yourself; and be not rashly guilty of a thing you hereafter may repent of. Consider that the errors of one branch of a family reflect dishonour on the whole. You have other daughters who, though pure as innocence itself, yet, being of the same blood, may be suspected liable to the same faults; for their sakes, therefore, rather smother than expose the crime of this fair offender.

Murcio. What! would you then have me to forgive, encourage, and suffer her to continue in this shameful prostitution under my own roof!

Conrade. No; but I would have you remember that she is still your child; and that it is your duty, as a father, to use your utmost efforts to retrieve her from perdition, not sink her deeper into it.

Murcio. As how retrieve her! Is she not already lost, irrecoverably lost, to reputation as well as virtue!

Conrade. Not so, I hope. All yet may be well, if her seducer can be prevailed upon to repair the injury he has done her by an honourable marriage.

Murcio. A vain expectation!

Conrade. 'Tis worth attempting, at least. But first you must oblige her to discover the name of this too happy man; for you see that, either by design or accident, the direction to him is torn off the letter.

Murcio. I protest, in the distraction of my thoughts, I had forgot that circumstance; and also to ask you by what means this infamous scrawl came into your possession.

On this Conrade related to him all the particulars he had observed while he had been watching his rival's coming out of the house; and when he had done, in order to encourage Murcio to take the advice he had just given him, added this description of the supposed gallant—

Conrade. I was very much vexed that I had not an opportunity of seeing his face; but his back being towards me, I could only take notice of his dress and air; and do assure you he has all the appearance of a man of fashion, and such a one as to whom you could not reasonably have refused your daughter, even if this accident had never happened.

Murcio. Oh, what a curse it is to have a disobedient child!

He appeared in the most bitter anguish of mind while uttering these last words; but having recovered himself a little, took pen, ink, and paper, and wrote the following lines to Melanthe—

'Thou Scandal to my Blood and Name!

'THAT you still live to receive
'this, thank the gentleman whom
'you would have wronged by intending
'to carry pollution to his bed. He has
'obtained a reprieve for you on this
'condition, that you declare the name
'and quality of your undoer, to the end
'that I may take such measures as I
'shall judge proper, to oblige him to do
'justice to the honour of a family of
'which you are the only blemish.
'Think not to deny your crime; I have
'the infamous witness of it under your
'own hand: but be plain and open in
'your confession, if you hope ever to
'obtain mercy, either from Heaven or
'your offended father,

'MURCIO.'

After having shewed this to Conrade, he called for the waiting-maid, and bid her give that letter to her mistress, and bring him an immediate answer. I followed, and saw with what agonies poor Melanthe read this cruel mandate. Between the fears of what her father's indignation might inflict upon her, and the shame of appearing guilty of a crime her soul disdained, she was so much overwhelmed, that for some minutes she had not power to speak; and when she did, it was only to utter this exclamation—

Melanthe. What will become of me! Oh this vile plot of Florimel's!

Molly. Lord, Madam, do not put yourself into this flurry! You know your father's temper well enough, and could not expect he would be less severe. But it will be all over; and you must resolve to bear it for a while.

Melanthe. I cannot, will not bear it! I will go down this instant, disclose all, and clear my innocence.

Molly. Sure, Madam, you would not be so mad! What, would you undo all, and be forced to marry Conrade at last?

Melanthe. Was there ever so terrible a dilemma! What answer can I give?

Molly. Dear Madam, say any thing. Tell him you are in love with——— Say any thing but the truth.

Melanthe. How silly am I to ask advice of such a giddy creature!

With this she turned herself towards a table whereon stood a standish, sat down, paused a while, then began to write; but had scarce finished two lines, before she left off, tore the paper, mused again, and then began afresh. The second essay met with the same fate as the former, and so did several succeeding ones; till at last she threw the pen out of her hand, started up, and said—

Melanthe. 'Tis in vain to attempt it. I cannot write.

Molly. Why then, Madam, say nothing: e'en let him think as he pleases, at present. If you will but pluck up a spirit, we shall do well enough. He will not kill you, for his own sake; and as for any thing else, you must content yourself to submit to it. Nothing can be so bad as marrying Conrade. I will go to Florimel presently: if I am so lucky as to find her at home, 'tis ten to one but she puts something into our heads.

Melanthe. Do so. I wish she were here.

While they were speaking, Murcio called very loud at the bottom of the stairs for Molly to come down; on which she said—'Do you hear, Madam? But 'I must face the storm, for fear it should 'come hither, and terrify you worse. I 'wish you had as much courage as I 'have.'

She said no more, but ran hastily down into the parlour; where I, with no less speed, attended her footsteps, quite impatient to hear how the pert baggage would behave.

Murcio. What is the reason, minx, that I have no answer to the letter you carried up?

Molly. Lord, Sir, there was somewhat or other in that letter that has frighted my poor lady almost out of her wits. She does nothing but cry and wring her hands. It would make your heart ache to see her. She write an answer! No indeed, she is not in a condition to give an answer.

Murcio. If she can't, you must, hussey! Who was that fellow you let out of my house yesterday morning?

Molly. I, Sir! I let out no fellow, not I.

Murcio. 'Tis false: my friend here, happening to pass through the street at that time, saw him come out.

Molly. Why then, Sir, your friend is no better than a pickthank for bringing you such idle stories; and I am not afraid to tell him so to his face.

Murcio. Was there ever such impudence!

Conrade. Come, come, Mrs. Molly, you had better confess the truth; it will be for the good of your lady, and yourself too.

Molly. Sir, I shall not tell a lye for the matter: I let out no fellow. There was a fine gentleman, indeed, that sat up all night playing at cards with my lady, that I let out; but no fellow, I assure you.

Murcio. Well; and pray, Mrs. Brazenface, what is the name of this fine gentleman?

Molly. Lord, Sir! do you think I know the names of all the gentlemen that come to visit my lady? Indeed, I am not so impertinent as to ask.

Murcio. No equivocation. Tell me this moment, or I shall be your death!

Molly. Bless me, Sir! how can you fright a body for nothing? But, if you would be my death twenty times over, I can say no more than I have done.

Conrade. Dear Murcio, this girl is not worth the passion you are in. I hope the young lady herself will satisfy you, when once she considers how much it is her interest to do so.

Murcio. Not while she has such a hardened wretch to encourage her obstinacy.—Hussey, pack up your trumpery, and get out of my house directly, or I shall provide a place for you in Bridewell.

Molly. Oh, dear Sir! I shall not give you that trouble; there are places enough to be had without your providing.

After she had left the room, and Murcio had vented his passion in two or three hearty curses, he turned to Conrade, and, with a tone of voice which expressed the deepest trouble of mind, uttered these words—'You see, my 'dear friend, that both mistress and 'maid are alike incorrigible. What 'now remains for me to do, either to 'preserve my family from disgrace, or 'this degenerate girl from everlasting 'ruin?' The other, who doubtless condemned

demned Melanthe more in his heart than he would let her father know he did, could find nothing to say in her defence; but that he hoped, when the first confusion of this discovery was a little over, she would be brought to reason; and therefore intreated he would allow her some time to recollect herself. As the conversation now began to consist only of railings on the one side, and persuasions to moderation on the other, I easily perceived that nothing of importance would be the result; so resolved to leave the two old gentlemen together, and accordingly took the first opportunity to get out of the house.

CHAP. VIII.

PRESENTS SOMETHING WHICH, IF THE AUTHOR'S HOPES DO NOT DECEIVE HIM, WILL AFFORD AN EQUAL SHARE OF SATISFACTION AS SURPRIZE.

BEING very anxious for the situation of poor Melanthe, I fully designed to make another visit to Murcio's house early the next morning; and accordingly got to Murcio's door just as Conrade had alighted from his coach, and was stepping in; so I had an easy access, and followed him up into the dining-room, where Murcio was then sitting, and expressed the satisfaction he took in seeing him in words to this effect—

Murcio. My dear friend, I am glad you are come to give me your opinion in a thing I am about to do. My ungracious daughter has given me no answer, made me no submissions. I cannot keep her in my house; and if I turn her out of it, am in danger of having my whole family scandalized by her behaviour: I am therefore resolved to send her to Cornwall, where I have a near kinsman.

Conrade. I flatter myself, Sir, that the intelligence I bring will save you that trouble, and the young lady so long a journey. I have discovered her favourite lover.

Murcio. Is it possible! For Heaven's sake, who—what is he!

Conrade. One you little suspect, though I have seen him often here. It is Dorimon.

Murcio. Dorimon! Yes, since his return from his travels, he visits here sometimes. His sister Florimel and Melanthe were brought up together at the boarding-school; and, since they left it, have scarcely been two days asunder. But I cannot think Dorimon has been her seducer: she is neither above his hopes, nor below his expectations. If he had any inclinations towards her, I know of nothing should hinder him from making his honourable addresses. But what grounds have you for such a supposition?

Conrade. You shall hear. You know I told you that I did not see his face; but, as I followed him a good part of the street, I took notice of his habit, which indeed had somewhat particular in it, and would have attracted my observation, had I seen it on any other person. It was a dark olive-coloured French barragon, laced with a very rich Point d'Espagne down the seams; he had also a fine flaxen wig, with a bag and a solitaire of an uncommon dimension. I then took him either for a foreigner, or one lately come from abroad. In the same dress, and as exactly as I saw him then, did I see him, within this half hour, at the chocolate-house. I cannot, indeed, swear to the man, but I think may safely to the cloaths, especially as I heard him say, on some gentlemen's praising the suit, and telling him they believed there was not such another in England, that he was pretty sure there was not; for he had bespoke it at Paris, according to his own taste, and it had not been come over long enough for any one to take a pattern by it.

Murcio. I must own there is a strong probability in what you say; but yet, without a certainty, know not what measures I can pursue.

Conrade. If you will take my advice, send for him: I heard him say he should dine at home, so is scarcely gone out. Give some distant hints, at first, concerning a marriage with your daughter; and, according to the answers he makes, you will be instructed how to proceed.

Murcio. It shall be so. I will not let him see I have any suspicion of my daughter's fault; and, whether there be any thing between them or not, a proposal of the nature you mention cannot seem strange to him, as our families have always lived together in a perfect harmony and good understanding.

He had no sooner said this, than he

called a ſervant, and ſent him with his compliments to Dorimon, to let him know he deſired to ſpeak with him immediately, if not otherwiſe engaged. After this, the two friends had ſome farther diſcourſe concerning what ſteps the father of Melanthe ſhould take in this affair; when the fellow who had been ſent on the above meſſage returned, and told his maſter that Dorimon ſaid he would not fail doing himſelf the honour of obeying his commands in a few minutes: on which Conrade took his leave; and Murcio ſat down, endeavouring to frame his temper and countenance ſo as to be ſuitable to the buſineſs he had in hand.

Dorimon appeared in a ſhort time; and, the firſt compliments being paſt, Murcio began to open what he had to ſay, by telling him that he had a great regard for his family; that he was a fine young gentleman; and that, being now five and twenty, he much wondered that he had not heard of his addreſſing ſome lady on the ſcore of marriage. To which Dorimon replied, that marriage was a thing he had not as yet much thought upon; and that, having a ſiſter who took care of his houſe, a wife was the leſs neceſſary to him. Murcio then demanded if he found any averſion in himſelf to changing his condition in favour of a woman of equal birth and fortune, and who would approve of his pretenſions. Dorimon ſeemed a little ſurprized at theſe interrogatories; but anſwered in the negative, with this proviſo, that the perſon of the lady were equally agreeable. Murcio, thinking this reply a proper cue for explaining himſelf, did ſo in the following manner—

Murcio. What think you, then, of my daughter Melanthe?

Dorimon. As of an angel, Sir, above my hopes.

Murcio. No fine ſpeeches, Dorimon; deal ſincerely with me. Do you like her well enough to marry her?

Dorimon. Yes, Sir, upon my ſoul! and ſhould bleſs the hand that gave her to me.

Murcio. Sir, I take you at your word; and give you mine that you ſhall have her, and ſix thouſand pounds, if you think that a ſufficient dower.

Dorimon. I do, Sir; and, though Melanthe is a ſufficient fortune of herſelf, ſhall accept your offer, and make a ſettlement accordingly.

Murcio. Then there remains no more than to get the marriage-articles drawn which, if you pleaſe, ſhall be to-morrow morning.

Dorimon. It cannot be too ſoon. But, Sir, may I not have leave to ſee her, to throw myſelf at her feet, and be aſſured ſhe will not regret the happineſs you beſtow upon me?

Murcio. Oh, Sir, you have nothing to apprehend on that account; for, to be plain with you, I deſigned her for another. She rejected the propoſal, for which ſhe has been under ſome diſgrace: but, as I have ſince diſcovered her diſobedience was occaſioned by the affection ſhe has for you, I was the more eaſily induced to pardon it. She does not yet know that I conſent to gratify her inclinations: but you ſhall have the pleaſure of telling her yourſelf.

He then went to the door, and ordered a ſervant to bid Melanthe come down: after which he turned back, and ſaid to Dorimon—'My daughter will wait on 'you preſently. I know you will excuſe my leaving you together: I have 'buſineſs calls me abroad; but expect 'to ſee you to-morrow morning, and 'ſhall have a lawyer here.' He ſaid no more; but went haſtily away, to avoid ſeeing his daughter. He had not left the room above half a minute, before Melanthe entered, but with a confuſion impoſſible to be expreſſed. She had expected no other, on being called down, than to meet ſome terrible effects of her father's diſpleaſure. Her eyes, red with tears, were now caſt down upon the floor, as ſhe advanced with ſlow and trembling ſteps; nor ſaw ſhe who was there, till Dorimon ſprung forward, and took her by the hand with theſe words—

Dorimon. Charming Melanthe, how am I tranſported at the goodneſs of your father! How incapable of expreſſing my gratitude for the permiſſion he has juſt now given me of telling you how much, how truly I adore you!

Melanthe. Bleſs me, Dorimon, what is the meaning of all this? Where is my father?

Dorimon. Gone, to give me the happy opportunity of endeavouring to inſpire you with ſentiments in favour of my paſſion, and conformable to his will.

Melanthe. Your paſſion, and his will! Certainly, Dorimon, you muſt either be mad, or I not in my ſenſes! For Heaven's ſake, explain this myſtery!

He

He was going to reply, when his ſiſter Florimel came tripping in. That young lady having been informed by Molly of all that had paſſed at Murcio's houſe, was extremely impatient to know how her fair friend behaved afterwards on that occaſion. Melanthe no ſooner ſaw her, than ſhe flew into her arms, and cried—

Melanthe. My dear, dear Florimel, what would I not have given to have ſeen you laſt night!

Florimel. I was no leſs eager to be with you. But I find things have quite changed their face. I met your father at the door as I entered; the old gentleman ſeems to be in quite good humour, deſired me to walk up, and told me I ſhould find you and my brother together.

Dorimon. Aye, my dear ſiſter, we are together; and, I hope, ſhall ſoon be joined to ſeparate no more.

Florimel. Separate no more! As how?

Dorimon. By the indiſſoluble ties of marriage. Murcio, the generous Murcio, has beſtowed her on me. To-morrow the articles are to be drawn, and there will then be nothing wanting but my angel's conſent for the conſummation of my bliſs.

Florimel. And was this the buſineſs on which he ſent for you in ſuch haſte?

Dorimon. The ſame.

Here Florimel burſt into ſo violent a fit of laughter, as rendered her unable to ſpeak for ſome time. In vain Dorimon aſked ſeveral times over the cauſe of this extravagant mirth; and it was but by degrees ſhe recovered herſelf enough to make this reply—

Florimel. I have found out the riddle!] It was I, brother, that have made this match. Yes, with the aſſiſtance of that ſuit of cloaths you have on.

Then addreſſing herſelf to Melanthe, proceeded thus—'You muſt know, 'my dear, that it was Conrade himſelf 'that watched me coming out of your 'houſe. I ſaw him ſtand perdu under 'Sir Thomas ******'s porch. He has 'certainly ſeen my brother in theſe 'cloaths; and, miſtaking him for me, 'has paſſed him upon your father for 'your ſuppoſed gallant.' Dorimon was now as much confounded, in his turn, as the two ladies had been in theirs; till his ſiſter, having firſt obtained Melanthe's leave, related to him the whole hiſtory of their contrivance to break the match with Conrade. This repetition occaſioned ſome pleaſantry between the brother and ſiſter; but Melanthe was too much aſhamed to bear any great part in it. Her new lover obſerving her ſeriouſneſs, ſpoke in this manner—

Dorimon. I have got nothing, Florimel, by the account you have given, but the mortification of that vanity Murcio had inſpired me with; and dare not now flatter myſelf that Melanthe will ſo readily, as I once hoped, acquieſce in the agreement made between us.

Florimel. If ſhe does not, all will come out; and if ſo, Murcio will certainly return to his firſt engagement to give her to Conrade. What ſay you, Melanthe; have you averſion enough for my brother to run ſo great a riſque?

This demand made Melanthe bluſh exceſſively. She pauſed, and hung down her head; but at laſt made this return—'So ſudden a change in my for-'tune might well excuſe me from 'giving a direct anſwer to ſuch a queſ-'tion. Of this, however, you may be 'aſſured, that I have not courage to 'diſobey my father a ſecond time, and 'that I love the ſiſter too well to have 'any averſion to the brother.'

On this Dorimon kiſſed her hand with a great deal of warmth, and ſaid many tender and paſſionate things to her; which, as the reader will eaſily conceive, I think it needleſs to repeat; and ſhall only add that, between the brother and the ſiſter, Melanthe was at laſt prevailed upon to confeſs, that it would be without the leaſt reluctance ſhe ſhould obey her father in the choice he had now made for her. Though there was now little cauſe to apprehend any diſappointment in theſe nuptials, yet I reſolved to ſee the thing fully concluded on; accordingly I went the next morning to Murcio's houſe, where I found him very buſy with his lawyer. Dorimon came in ſoon after; and the writings were preſently filled up, ſigned, ſealed, and duly executed, by both parties: and the lawyer had no ſooner left the room, than Murcio ſpoke to Dorimon in theſe terms—

Murcio. Well, Dorimon, I think there is nothing now wanting for the making you my ſon, except the ceremony of the church; and I don't care how ſoon that alſo was performed. I

do

do not love to see affairs of this nature kept long in hand. Besides, you must know, that on my daughter's refusing to marry the person I first proposed to her, I swore in my passion that I would never see her face again till she was a wife.

Dorimon. You may be assured, Sir, I shall think every moment an age; and I do not doubt but the knowledge of the vow you have made will very much expedite my wishes.

Murcio. I am going directly to my little country-seat, and shall leave you to consult with her about the day; but will write to the rector of ****, who is my kinsman, and desire he will perform the office: when that is over, would have you both come down to *****, where you may depend upon meeting with a fatherly reception.

Nothing farther, of any consequence, was said by either of them. Murcio took coach for the country, and Dorimon went to the apartment of his mistress; where strenuously pressing her for the speedy consummation of his happiness, her father's pretended vow served as an excuse for her compliance, and she consented that the wedding should be the next Sunday after. No accident retarded the fulfilling this agreement, and they were married on the day appointed; after which they set out, accompanied by Florimel, for *****, to receive the blessing Murcio had promised to bestow upon them. As no one of the company had any reason to be discontented at what had happened, it is not to be doubted but the goddess of chearfulness accompanied them in their little journey: I say journey, because the sister of Dorimon having an aversion to the water, they went in a landau, in complaisance to her; but the subject of their conversation is not in my power to relate, as I had no opportunity of being witness of it.

CHAP. IX.

CONTAINS A SUCCINCT ACCOUNT OF SOME FARTHER PARTICULARS, IN SOME MEASURE RELATIVE TO THE FOREGOING ADVENTURE.

HAVING married my two new-made lovers, the reader will possibly imagine, that the last act of the play is ended, and that I should now drop the curtain, to prepare for some fresh subject of entertainment; but he must wait awhile; I have not yet done with any of my characters: and besides, as there are many things which seem to require a farther explanation, I cannot think of parting with my favourite Florimel, without giving her those just praises which her wit and good-humour may justly claim. It is not unlikely, indeed, but that there may be some over-scrupulous ladies in the world, who will be so far from approving the character of this charming girl, that they will highly contemn her for assuming the air and habit of a man, though for never so short a space of time; and even rail at Melanthe, for consenting to put in execution the stratagem she had contrived for her deliverance from an evil so justly dreaded by her. Such as these will certainly think I have said enough, if not too much, on the occasion; and perhaps throw aside the book, and cry they will read no farther. Well, be it so; the loss will be entirely their own: I am pretty confident neither my reputation, nor the profits of my publisher, will suffer by their ill-nature in this point. It is for the entertainment of the gay, the witty, and truly virtuous—who, by the way, are never censorious—that these lucubrations are chiefly intended; and if I am so fortunate as to please them, should give myself no great pain what may be said of me by those of the above-mentioned class. In defiance, therefore, of these fair, or rather unfair criticks, I shall proceed in what I have farther to relate concerning the principal subjects of this narrative.

On their arrival at *****, they were received by Murcio with a shew of the greatest satisfaction; yet I, who took care to be there before them, in order to be witness of what should pass at this first interview, could easily perceive that he embraced his son-in-law with more cordiality and less constraint than he did his daughter. The remembrance of her supposed fault doubtless rendered him unable to treat her with his accustomed tenderness: he scarce touched her cheek in saluting her; and when he gave her his blessing, added—'Pray Heaven 'your future conduct may deserve it!' It could not be otherwise, but that all the company must comprehend the full meaning of these words: but poor Melanthe

Ianthe was so much affected by them, that she burst into a flood of tears; and throwing herself a second time at her father's feet, addressed him in these pathetick terms—

Melanthe. Oh, Sir, I beg, I beseech you, by all the love you once had for me, to forgive the only act of disobedience I was ever guilty of; pardon but the aversion I had to the match you first proposed to me, and you will easily absolve the rest.

Dorimon. Yes, Sir, my dear, my charming wife, is as innocent of every thing that can deserve your blame, as I am from even the most distant wish of violating her purity, or dishonouring your family.

Florimel. Aye, aye, it is poor me that am alone in fault; but, since the mischief I have done has been productive of so much good, I scarce doubt of being excused by a gentleman of so much good sense as Murcio. I have delivered your daughter, Sir, by my contrivance, from the horrors of a forced marriage; I have procured a wife for my brother, with whom, if he is not the most happy, I am certain he deserves to be the most miserable, of all mankind; and I have got you a son-in-law, who I hope will merit that honour by his future behaviour.

Murcio, who could not form even the most distant guess at the meaning of all this, looked sometimes on the one, and sometimes on the other, with all the tokens of the utmost amazement, without being able to speak one syllable; which gave Florimel the opportunity of unravelling the whole mystery of the affair, as she had before promised Melanthe to take upon herself to do. In spite of the little resentment Murcio at first conceived for the trick that had been put upon him, he could not forbear smiling at the invention of the contriver; and the wit and spirit with which that young lady talked to him upon it, very much contributed to bring him into good humour: but that which entirely reconciled him to the wedded pair was, the consideration that Dorimon was wholly ignorant of the plot till after the marriage was concluded; and the assurance Melanthe gave him, that she was far from any intention to deceive him, but had flattered herself with the hope that Conrade would have broke the engagement without mentioning to him the reasons he had for doing so. Though to have married his daughter to Conrade would have saved him six thousand pounds, yet the many ill consequences which would probably have attended so disproportionate a match, now occurring to his mind, which before he had not thought upon, made him not only contented, but rejoiced, that this change of hands had happened; and he could not forbear kissing and hugging Florimel for being the chief author of it.

Every one now endeavouring to outvie the other in giving testimonies of his good-humour, among the many gay and gallant things said by Dorimon on this occasion, he protested to keep his French cloaths as long as he lived, for a perpetual memento of the good they had done for him, and never wear them but on the anniversary of that happy day which gave his dear Melanthe to his arms. On falling afterwards into some discourse concerning the oddness of the accident which had brought about a marriage so little thought of by either of the parties, yet so agreeable to both, as well as to their friends, Murcio expressed himself in this manner—

Murcio. I cannot help thinking that there is something peculiarly remarkable in this transaction, and looks as if the hand of Heaven had directed the accomplishment.

Florimel. I dare almost engage my own life for the mutual happiness of theirs. Their humours are so exactly suited to each other, that neither of them are fit for any body else; and, now I consider on it, am amazed that, in the long acquaintance they had together, this business never came into either of their heads till chance put it there.

Dorimon. Nay, sister, I am now convinced, by the transport and the pleasing flutter at my heart, on the offer Murcio made of his daughter, that I was then passionately in love with her, though without knowing it.

Melanthe. And if you had been as indifferent to me, as I then thought you were, I should not certainly have been so soon and so easily persuaded to be yours.

Murcio. Well, all things have happened for the best; and there is nothing now wanting to compleat my satisfaction,

tion, but the clearing up Melanthe's innocence to Conrade. I should be glad he were here.

The word was scarce out of his mouth, when a servant came into the room, and informed him, that the person he had mentioned was below; on which he ordered he should be immediately introduced. The old gentleman, who had heard nothing of what had happened, nor seen Murcio since the conversation with him, repeated in a former chapter, had been impatient to know the success of his proposal to Dorimon; and finding he did not return to town as usual, made him this visit at *****, in order to gratify his curiosity. He had not advanced above half way into the room, when Murcio presented the bride and bridegroom to him; and told him he had been just wishing for him to congratulate the nuptials. Conrade endeavoured to compose himself enough to salute them with the accustomed forms; but as he had not in his heart believed that Dorimon would be prevailed upon to marry Melanthe, though he had advised her father to make the experiment, was so much surprized on finding the affair concluded, that he could not forbear testifying it in his looks, as well as by crying out—

Conrade. What, married!

Florimel. Yes, Sir, they are married: the indissoluble knot is tied; for which all due thanks be given to your fortunate mistake.

Conrade. My mistake, Madam! Pardon me, if I do not comprehend your meaning.

Dorimon. I believe you do not, Sir: yet it is to your mistaking another for me, that I am indebted for being put in possession of a happiness which otherwise I must have solicited for a long series of time, and perhaps at last never have obtained. I do assure you, Sir, I never presumed to entertain one wish to the dishonour of Melanthe; and was sleeping in my own bed when you imagined me just risen from her arms.

Murcio. He tells you nothing but the truth. He is innocent, so is Melanthe. But here stands her gallant; here is the author of this enigma.

In concluding these words, which he had uttered with the most chearful air, he patted Florimel upon her cheek, and gently pushed her towards Conrade: but that gentleman was now in such a consternation, that he scarce knew where he was, much less had the power of distinguishing the sense of any thing he either saw or heard; till Florimel related to him, in her sprightly fashion, every particular of that stratagem which had occasioned the breaking off the intended match between him and Melanthe. Murcio also, and Dorimon, averring the truth of what she said, he began at last to see clearly into the whole affair; after which Melanthe, with a great deal of modesty and sweetness, addressed herself to him in these terms—

Melanthe. I hope, Sir, you will pardon the deception put upon you, as I was constrained to pursue so extraordinary a method, to avoid a thing which, in the end, must have been no less disagreeable to you than to myself. I shall always acknowledge my obligation to the generous offer your affection made: but love, Sir, is not in our power; if it were, my gratitude to you, the consideration of my own interest, and the duty owing to my father, would certainly have inspired me with it.

Conrade. Say no more, sweet lady. I am ashamed of my past folly; and only wish you would exert all the influence you have over your witty she-gallant, not to expose this story in print. I should be sorry, methinks, to see myself in a novel or play.

Florimel. No, no, Sir; you need be under no apprehensions on that score. I would not, for my own sake, have the world know I put on breeches; lest my husband, when I get one, should be afraid I would attempt to wear them afterwards.

This reply of Florimel's set the whole company into a fit of laughter, and would doubtless have been the occasion of many pleasant repartees, if the butler had not that instant given them a summons to the next room, where was a table elegantly spread with every thing suitable to the season. But, as I could not partake of any of the delicacies I saw before me, I thought it best to leave the house; so accordingly I slipped out, plucked off my belt, went into a boat, and ordered the waterman to row as fast as possible to London; where being arrived, I contented myself with such fare as my own homely board afforded. Not many weeks had this adventure elapsed, before I heard that Florimel was married to a young gentleman

gentleman whom for ſeveral years ſhe had loved, and by whom ſhe was equally beloved. My inſatiate curioſity, on this information, led me to enquire into the hidden cauſe which had ſo long delayed the completion of their mutual wiſhes; and, by ways and means too tedious to be here inſerted, I at laſt diſcovered it to be ſuch as attracted my higheſt eſteem and admiration.

Dorimon had been a little extravagant in his equipage and way of living while on his travels. Her whole fortune lay in his hands; and if called out, which in all probability would have been the caſe if ſhe had married, he muſt have been obliged to mortgage ſome part of his eſtate for the payment. It was therefore to ſave her brother from ſo great an inconvenience, that this generous young lady had been deaf to all the ſolicitations of a beloved lover, and the ſoft pleadings of her own heart, till Melanthe's fortune coming into the family, removed the only impediment to her wiſhes. Thus, by the moſt unſeen, undreamt-of means, does Providence diſpoſe every thing for the advantage of it's favourites. Florimel, by her wit, and contrivance to ſerve her fair friend, without propoſing the leaſt intereſt to herſelf, or even imagining ſhe could have any, not only brought about her brother's happineſs, but met her own reward, in the accompliſhment of her felicity. Theſe two families live together in the moſt perfect harmony; and Murcio, who is little leſs fond of Florimel than of his own daughter, paſſes moſt of his time among them. Conrade alſo is extremely intimate with both; inſomuch that it is thought he will, at his deceaſe, divide a good part of his large fortune between them.

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

THE

INVISIBLE SPY.

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

IS A KIND OF WARNING-BELL TO THE PUBLICK, AND GIVES A MELANCHOLY, THOUGH TOO COMMON PROOF, THAT A PERSON IN ENDEAVOURING, BY UNJUST OR IMPRUDENT MEASURES, TO AVOID FALLING INTO AN IMAGINARY MISFORTUNE, IS FREQUENTLY LIABLE TO BRING ON EFFECTUALLY WHAT MIGHT OTHERWISE NEVER HAVE HAPPENED.

OF all the paſſions which diſtract the human mind, there is none more pernicious in it's quality, nor more dreadful in it's conſequences, than jealouſy. It is looked upon, indeed, as the moſt certain proof of a ſtrong and violent affection; yet it is ſuch a proof as no one would wiſh to experience, as it infallibly involves the beloved object in a variety of diſquiets, whether innocent or guilty: nor is the perſon poſſeſſed of this raging fury leſs wretched; ſo juſt are theſe words of Mr. Dryden—

'O jealouſy! thou raging ill,
'Why haſt thou found a place in lover's
'hearts?
'Afflicting what thou canſt not kill,
'And poiſoning Love himſelf with his own
'darts.'

And as the inimitable Shakeſpeare yet more emphatically, in my opinion, expreſſes it—

'O what damn'd minutes tells he o'er,
'Who doats, yet doubts; ſuſpects, yet ſtrong-
'ly loves!'

But as jealouſy frequently takes poſſeſſion of the ſoul by almoſt imperceptible degrees, the following little narrative may ſerve as an antidote againſt it's poiſon; and warn every one, married perſons eſpecially, not to give way to it's firſt attacks, leſt it ſhould be in time wholly ſubdued by it.

Cleora had from her very infancy been promiſed in marriage to the ſon of a neighbouring gentleman, about three years older than herſelf. An inclination for her intended huſband grew up with her years; nor was his affection leſs tender for her, whom he expected would one day be his wife: but when the innocent

nocent pair became ripe for the consummation of their mutual wishes, an unhappy dispute happened between their parents, which entirely broke off the match at once, and they were forbid to see each other any more. As I was not at that time acquainted with either of the lovers, I cannot pretend to describe what their young hearts sustained in this cruel separation: it was doubtless very grievous to them both at first; but absence, and variety of amusements, provided for them by their respective parents, in order to dissipate their chagrin, by degrees wrought the desired effects. Leander, for so he was called, grew one of the gayest men about the town; and Cleora was so far weaned from the remembrance of him, that she obeyed her father without reluctance in receiving the addresses of Aristus; who, after the necessary forms of courtship, became her husband.

Few nuptials gave a greater promise of felicity. The births, the fortunes, of the wedded pair, were equal; their ages perfectly agreeable: she was not quite nineteen, and he no more than five and twenty; she was a very lovely woman he a most graceful man. He had adored her to so romantick a height, that it was thought, if he had not obtained her, a dagger or a bowl of poison must have been his fate. She treated him with all the tenderness that could be expected from a virtuous woman by a reasonable man. They were, in the first months of their marriage, the envy and admiration of as many as knew them. But, alas! how uncertain is the date of human happiness! When Heaven is not pleased to bestow on us a contented mind; I mean, when we do not ask that blessing, and endeavour to acquire it; in vain indulgent Fortune lavishes her whole stock of bounties on us; we repine amidst our plenty, enjoy nothing we possess, and are wretches because we will be so.

The bridal house, so lately the theatre of joy and pleasure, soon became the cell of gloomy sullenness and black despair. The eyes of the beautiful Cleora were frequently seen red with weeping: she ceased to appear at any publick place, and received very little company at home; while on the brow of the once chearful, gay Aristus, now loured a heavy melancholy, and all the indications of a deep inward grief. Every one saw the change, but none could presently discern the cause: it could not, however, long be kept a secret; the servants who waited immediately on their persons were the first who discovered it; these reported it to the others, and they failed not to whisper it to as many as they were acquainted with—that their master was prodigiously jealous of his lady.

The first tokens he gave of this frenzy, as I have been since informed, was to debar Cleora from going to the opera, the play, the masquerade, and all routs and assemblies; all which places she had been accustomed to frequent. She obeyed him, notwithstanding, without murmuring or repining; and told him, with a great deal of sweetness, that if those diversions were infinitely dearer to her than ever they had been, she would readily sacrifice all the pleasure she took in them to that of testifying her love and duty to him. Not contented with this, he proceeded farther, and forbade her to make any visits without him, except to his mother, who lived but in the next street; and then to let him know, that he might meet her there, and bring her home. Hard as this injunction seemed to her, she complied with it; being resolved, if possible, to chace from his mind all those ideas she found he had conceived in prejudice of her discretion, and convince him that she regarded nothing so much as his satisfaction.

What more could woman do, or man expect? yet all was not enough to make this jealous husband easy. Whenever they were abroad together, if any gentleman happened to be in company, the least gallant thing said to her, or complaisance returned to it by her, immediately set the worm within his brain a madding, and made him, on their coming home, reproach her in terms very unbecoming in him to make use of, and difficult for her to bear with patience: yet, nevertheless, he still loved her, loved her to an excess; but, as the poet says—

'No signs of love in jealous men remain,
'But that which sick men have of life,
'their pain.'

This behaviour of Aristus engrossed much of the conversation of the town, and various were the conjectures passed

upon it. Some highly blamed him; others were apt to imagine there had really been some imprudences on the part of Cleora; and not a few there were among her own sex, who, hating her for those very perfections which ought to have excited their esteem, scrupled not to pronounce her guilty of every thing she could be suspected of.

Much was this lady to be pitied. Deprived of all those pleasures to which her youth had been accustomed, ill-treated by her husband, censured by her acquaintance, and secluded from the society of those who might have found means of diverting, if not wholly dissipating her melancholy. To add to her misfortunes, she had no friend near her to whom she might complain. Her father, being a widower, had broke up house-keeping soon after her marriage, and was retired, with an intent to pass the remainder of his days with her elder sister, who was settled in a far distant county; so that the only person from whom she received any consolation was Miss Lucia, the sister of Aristus, a young lady of great good-nature, and who believing her truly innocent, used her utmost endeavours to put all chimeras to her prejudice out of her brother's head.

The discourses which continually filled my ears about this family, and the different opinions the world had of the manner of their living together, made me resolve to have recourse to my Invisibility, in order to discover which was in the right. Accordingly, I went one day, equipped as usual, with my Belt and Tablet, to make a visit at their house. Aristus was abroad; but I found Cleora, sitting in a very pensive posture, in her dressing room. I had not been there above two minutes, before her footman came in, and presented her with a letter, which he told her was left for her by a porter, who said it required no answer, and was gone.

I must confess that, on hearing this, I was guilty of great injustice to Cleora, and began to be apprehensive that her husband's suspicions were founded on too solid reasons; but I was soon ashamed of my rash judgment, when, slipping behind her chair, and looking over her shoulder as she read, I perceived the letter was from Miss Lucia, and contained these lines—

'DEAR SISTER,

'WORDS cannot express how 'greatly I am troubled, on 'finding myself obliged to send this, 'instead of waiting on you in person. 'Be assured I love and value your conversation as I ought; and shall no 'less suffer in being deprived of it, 'Heaven knows for how long a time, 'than you will do in the knowledge of 'the cause. Some idle stories, of which, 'I dare believe, my brother's unhappy caprice has been the sole occasion, have reached the ears of my 'mamma, and made her think it improper for me to be seen with you, 'while the world continues to judge of 'you in the manner it does at present. 'She heard of your message to me, and 'strictly forbade me to obey the summons. You know too well, my dear 'Cleora, what duty is owing from a 'child to a parent, and also how much 'my father's will has left me in her 'power, to resent the painful proof I 'now give of my obedience to her. I 'wish, for my own sake, as well as 'yours, that she, my brother, and every 'one that knows us, were as well convinced as myself of your perfect innocence; but, till that happy time arrives, must content myself with the 'memory of the many happy hours we 'have passed together, and the hopes of 'many more yet to come, when once 'the horrid cloud which now separates 'us is removed. Farewel! That Heaven may send you comfort under your 'present affliction, and speedily relieve 'you from it, shall be the constant 'prayers of her who is, with the greatest 'sincerity, your most affectionate sister,

'LUCIA.'

Scarce had she gone through half this epistle, before her countenance betrayed the effect it produced. Disdain, rage, grief, seemed now to have united all their force to raise a tempest in her mind; which immediately broke forth in these and the like exclamations—'Deprived of my poor Lucia, too, and 'on so shocking a pretence! Good Heaven! for what unknown crime of mine, 'or of my ancestors, am I linked into 'such a family! Mother and son alike 'unjust, ungrateful, base, tyrannick! 'Have I renounced all the gay amusements of life, submitted my temper to

'the

'the will of an imperious husband, and 'made it my whole study to oblige him, 'to meet at last with this ungenerous, 'this barbarous return! My virtue su-'spected, my reputation traduced, and 'my conversation shunned as a dis-'grace! Oh, 'tis too much—too much 'for human patience to sustain!'

Many other expressions of the same nature did her passion vent; till, at last, recollecting the request Lucia had made in the postscript of her letter, she snatched it hastily from off her toilet, and thrust it into the fire; saying, at the same time, 'Poor Lucia, however, must not suffer 'for her friendship to me.'

Aristus being returned home, was that instant coming up stairs; which being opposite to the room where Cleora was, and the door open, he had an opportunity of seeing this last action, though not of hearing the words which accompanied it. He flew like lightning to the chimney, in order to save the paper, not doubting but it contained something that might add fresh fuel to his jealousy; but, nimble as he was, the flames were yet more quick, and left not the least part of what he so much wanted unconsumed. This disappointment, joined with what he had seen Cleora do, so much inflamed him, that looking on her with eyes sparkling with indignation, he saluted her with this reproach—

Aristus. I perceive, Madam, you will be still too cunning for me. Had I come a moment sooner, I might, perhaps, have discovered enough in that paper, to have silenced all your future boastings of virtue and fidelity.

Cleora. Oh, Sir, you need be under no apprehensions on that score. The continuance of your base suspicions deserve not that I should be at any pains to undeceive you.

Aristus. No, 'twould be in vain: too well I know you. Nor can you, dare you, now attempt to justify yourself, after the glaring proof I have received of your infidelity.

Cleora. What proof?

Aristus. That paper, perfidious woman!—that paper, whose ashes, could they speak, would rise up in judgment against you.

Cleora. This is madness, or some new pretext to use me ill. Pray, what can the most injurious of your imaginations suggest on the burning of a bit of paper?

Aristus. Did I not observe your countenance while throwing the lewd scrawl into the fire? Did not your gloating eyes pursue it as you would the fellow from whom it came? Were not all the marks of guilt and confusion on your cheeks on my approach? But this is not all: I was told below that you had just received a letter by a porter. Answer to that, thou hypocrite! Does it become a married woman, of your rank and circumstances, to receive letters, brought by such messengers?

Cleora. A married woman! say rather a married wretch! for such are all who have husbands like Aristus.

Aristus. Still you evade the question; but, if you would not deserve to be the wretch you call yourself, be once sincere, and tell me from which of your pretended admirers that letter came.

Cleora. From none.

Aristus. Perhaps, then, some female agents, some fly promoters of your amorous intrigues. But no equivocations: explain the whole, or, by Heaven, my sword——

Cleora. Do! kill me! it is the only act of kindness you can shew, and all I now wish to receive from you.

Aristus. So daring in your crimes, abandoned creature! But get out of my sight this moment, lest I be indeed provoked to do a deed I might hereafter repent of.

Cleora. Monster!—But to quit your presence is a command I shall always be ready to obey.

It was with an unspeakable haughtiness that Cleora uttered these words as she flung out of the room. I am apt to believe, by the amazement Aristus now appeared in, that this was the first time she had ever testified any great marks of resentment for his ill treatment of her. He stood for some moments in a profound reverie; and, when he came out of it, lifted up his hands and eyes to heaven, saying—'Good God! nothing 'but the most perfect innocence, or the 'most consummate guilt, could inspire 'a woman with so much boldness. 'I know not what to think.' Then folding his arms, again seemed lost in meditation; which having indulged a while, the subject of it burst out in these words—'If she were innocent, where-

'fore

'fore should she conceal from me the 'contents of that cursed letter? No, 'tis too plain she is guilty. In vain 'would my fond heart, that still doats 'on her, find excuses for her behaviour. 'Yet it would be some ease to be con-'vinced: but it is impossible; she has 'too much art. How true, O Dryden, 'are thy words—

"False women to new joys unseen can
"move;
"There are no prints left in the paths of
"love.
"All other goods by publick marks are
"known;
"But this, we most desire to keep, has
"none."

After this, he walked several times backwards and forwards in the room, then ran hastily down stairs, as I imagined, in search of Cleora; but finding he did not, and went out of the house, I also left it too, having an engagement of my own that evening.

CHAP. II.

IN WHICH THE READER IS REQUESTED TO EXPECT NO MORE THAN A CONTINUATION OF THE SAME NARRATIVE BEGUN IN THE PRECEDING CHAPTER.

THE distress in which I left Cleora, and the knowledge I now had of her innocence very much affected me; and I must either have changed my nature, or have lost that happy gift of Invisibility which enabled me to discover almost every thing, not to have flown the next morning to the house of Aristus, in order to inform myself what effects the conversation of the preceding night had produced. I truly pitied the unhappy pair: for though Aristus was unjust and cruel in his suspicions, yet I plainly saw he suffered no less in his own mind than what he inflicted on his much-injured wife; especially when I reflected that he was not guilty through a want of affection for her, but a too violent excess of it; as is observed by one of our best English poets—

'The greater care the higher passion shews,
'We hold that dearest we most fear to
'lose.'

Indeed I soon found, how much more than I could even have imagined this offending husband deserved my commiseration. He was abroad, and Cleora not yet risen from her bed, when I made my visit; which, as near as I can remember, was somewhat past eleven o'clock. Resolved, however, not to lose my labour entirely, I had recourse for intelligence to the tatlers of the kitchen; whom, according to my wish, I found busy in discourse on the very point I wanted. Some took the part of their master, some of their lady: and, upon the whole, I found, that a second quarrel having ensued after Aristus came home, Cleora had refused either to sup or sleep with him, but lay in a bed she had ordered to be prepared for her in another room; on which he went not to his own, but had continued the whole night walking about the house, and behaved like a man totally deprived of reason; and that, when morning came, he went out.

On a sudden, hearing the footman say that his master knocked at the street-door, I followed as fast as I could; being more curious to see how Aristus would behave, than to hear what would be the issue of the contest between the servants. Accordingly I got close in the corner of an arch while he passed by, and could see nothing in his countenance of that ferocity the servants had been describing; on the contrary, a perfect composure seemed to me to sit upon all his features, and left not the least traces of dissatisfaction. I attended him to the chamber which Cleora had made choice of for her repose, if it were possible for her to take any, the preceding night. He knocked gently at the door; but finding it not readily opened, retired, and went into the dining-room; where he called a servant, and bid him seek his wife's waiting-maid, and order her to come immediately to him. The young woman presently appeared; though, I easily discerned, not without some tremor of the nerves; expecting, perhaps, to participate in the effects of her master's displeasure: her countenance, however, grew more assured, when he spoke in the most courteous accents, saying—

Aristus. Is your lady awake yet, Mrs. Betty?

Waiting-maid. Yes, Sir.

Aristus. Then let her know I am ready

ready for breakfaſt; and aſk if ſhe will have the tea ſerved where ſhe is, or in her own dreſſing-room, as uſual.

She ſaid no more; and, after making a low curtſey, went out of the room, very much ſurprized at this ſudden turn; as indeed was I, after what I had ſeen and heard; nor was able to determine, as yet, whether the extraordinary complaiſance he ſhewed was real or affected. I was ſoon convinced, however, when the maid returned with this anſwer to his meſſage—

Waiting maid. Sir, my lady deſires to be excuſed. She has got a violent head-ache, and begs not to be diſturbed.

Ariſtus. Tell her I bring her news that will make her well. No—hold—I will go myſelf.

With theſe laſt words he flew to the chamber; and, puſhing open the door, which was now unlocked, found his wife ſitting in a very melancholy and dejected poſture. She ſtarted up at ſight of him; and, without giving him leave to ſpeak, accoſted him in theſe terms—

Cleora. 'Tis hard that no part of a houſe, of which I am flattered with the name of miſtreſs, can protect me from the inſults of a man who certainly married me with no other view than to make me miſerable.

Ariſtus. Oh, ſay not ſo! I will ſoon convince you to the contrary; nor ſhall you ever more have cauſe to fly the preſence of Ariſtus. I own I have been to blame; have ſaid and done a thouſand things that I am aſhamed to think of. But why, my dear Cleora, did you raiſe my paſſion to that guilty height? Why conceal from me the author and contents of the letter which gave me ſo much pain?

Cleora. It would be eaſy for me to juſtify my refuſal.

Ariſtus. I know it would, my angel; full well I know it would: but I am now let into the ſecret, without your being guilty of a breach of friendſhip to oblige me.

Cleora. What is it you mean, Ariſtus?

Ariſtus. I have been this morning at my mother's; where, ſpeaking of our unhappy quarrel, and the motive of it, my ſiſter immediately changed countenance; and, after vindicating your conduct with the utmoſt vehemence, and as ſeverely condemning mine, confeſſed that it was herſelf that had ſent that letter to you by a porter, and had deſired you to burn it as ſoon as read.

Cleora. Dear Lucia! Oh that the brother had the ſiſter's temper!

Ariſtus. Brother and ſiſter are equally devoted to you. If Lucia were Ariſtus, ſhe would do as Ariſtus does; and if Ariſtus were Lucia, he would act like Lucia. The difference of ſexes makes all the difference in our ſentiments or behaviour. Her's is a tender friendſhip, mine a raging love; which, while happy in your poſſeſſion, trembles at even the moſt diſtant poſſibility of ever being leſs ſo.

Cleora. Can it be love that ſuſpects my virtue?

Ariſtus. By Heaven! my cooler moments have never ſet you down as capable of wronging me, or of diſhonouring yourſelf; but when paſſion rages in the ſoul, reaſon has little government over our thoughts or words. I know I have been much to blame; but, O Cleora! forgive a fault occaſioned only by an exceſs of fondneſs. So dear I prize you, that I envy the very air that breathes upon your lips; and wiſh to grow for ever there, and keep out all intruders.

Cleora. But do you conſider how wretched this cauſeleſs jealouſy has made me?

Ariſtus. Yes, and could tear out my heart for having ever harboured the leaſt unjuſt ſuſpicion of you; yet have I ſuffered torments much greater than was in my power to inflict. Could you be ſenſible of the agonies I felt during this laſt whole cruel night, you muſt, you would forgive and pity me.

Cleora. Mine have not been leſs; yet could I forget all, had my reputation been untouched by your ill-uſage. You now know the purport of your ſiſter's letter; and can you think it poſſible for me to ſupport, with patience, the being looked upon by your kindred as a diſgrace to the family I am come among?

Ariſtus. Think not ſo, my dear Cleora. My ſiſter was always aſſured of your innocence, and a ſtrenuous vindicator of every thing you did. My mother never thought worſe than that ſome little inadvertencies in your conduct had wrought me up to the follies I have been guilty of, which ſhe has juſt now ſe-

verely

verely chid me for. They will both wait on you this afternoon, and give you all the proofs in their power of the ſincere reſpect and tenderneſs they have for you.

Cleora. Well, Ariſtus, if I could be certain that this was the laſt trial you would make of my good-nature, I might, perhaps, endeavour to think no more on what is paſt.

Ariſtus. If ever I fall back into my former errors, deſpiſe me, hate me, think me the worſt of men. No, be aſſured I am too much aſhamed of what I have been, ever to be the like again; and, as a proof of the perfect confidence I now have in you, henceforward keep what company you pleaſe. I ſhall preſcribe no rules for your conduct; I ſhall leave all to yourſelf, and be ſatisfied that all you do is right.

Cleora. I ſhall take the leſs liberty for your granting me ſo much. But, if you ſhould relapſe, remember what a certain celebrated author of our ſex ſays on this occaſion—

'We women to ourſelves this juſtice owe,
'That thoſe who think us falſe, ſhould
'find us ſo.'

She ſpoke this with ſo enchanting a ſmile, that Ariſtus, though not yet quite ſure that what he did would be agreeable, could not forbear catching her in his arms, and holding her for ſome time locked in the moſt ſtrict embrace; then letting her looſe, and looking on her with the extremeſt tenderneſs, cried—

Ariſtus. Do you then forgive me?

Cleora. I do.

With theſe words, ſhe threw her ſnowy arms about his neck, and put her face cloſe to his, returning all the endearments he had juſt before given her; after which, that is, as ſoon as the tranſport he was in would give him leave to ſpeak, he ſaid—

Ariſtus. My for ever adored Cleora, depend upon it, that the whole ſtudy of my life ſhall be to requite this goodneſs.

Cleora. Treat me but as my actions deſerve; I aſk no more. But come, let us go to breakfaſt.

With this they went arm in arm into the next room, where Mrs. Betty and the tea-equipage waited their approach. I now left this once more happy pair to enjoy the ſweets of their reconciliation; and, as I doubted not but the contrition of Ariſtus would be as laſting, as by many indications I had reaſon to think it was ſincere, expected not that any future events, worthy the attention of an Inviſible Spy, would happen to call me to their houſe again. But, unhappily for the perſons concerned in it, a very few days after convinced me how little I was endowed with the ſpirit of prophecy; and alſo, that when once the fatal fire of jealouſy has got poſſeſſion of the mind, though it may lie dormant for a while, yet the leaſt wafting of a feather, or even a ſhadow, is ſufficient to give it motion, and kindle the ſmothered embers into a blaze.

I was loitering one morning in the Park. The air was ſerene, and not cold, the time of the year conſidered; for it was then November. Few people being there, I had an opportunity of indulging contemplation with the wonders of nature; which, even in the moſt barren ſeaſon, affords matter to attract our admiration; and was almoſt loſt in thought, when I was ſuddenly rouzed from it by the appearance of Cleora; who, in a rich, genteel diſhabille, came tripping down the walk; and, after looking two or three times round her, ſeated herſelf on a bench juſt oppoſite to St. James's Houſe. My ſurprize to find a lady of her rank alone in that place ſtopped my farther progreſs, and engaged me to draw near her, in order to obſerve whether chance, or any particular motive, had brought her hither. In leſs time than the taking a pinch of ſnuff would laſt, Ariſtus came as from the palace: he ſaw his wife at a diſtance; croſſed over, and came to her, ſaying—

Ariſtus. What, are you here, my dear, and alone?

Cleora. You ſee I am; but I did not expect to be picked up by a gentleman this morning. We are well met, however; and, if you have no buſineſs that requires haſte, ſhould be glad you would give me your company while I ſtay, which will not be long.

Ariſtus. With all my heart. I was only going to the coffee-houſe. And, in return for my complaiſance, you ſhall tell me by what accident I find you here thus unguarded.

Cleora. Can one be unguarded where there are ſo many ſoldiers? But, you muſt know, I have been among the ſhops at Charing Croſs, and made a great many purchaſes. I chuſe to walk over

the Park. I had William with me; but, as I knew the centry would not suffer him to pass through with the things, I sent him home the other way. When I came hither, I found the air so extremely pleasant, that I was tempted to sit down and enjoy a little of it; especially as I found nobody here that I thought would take notice of me. And now you have the whole history of my morning's transactions.

Aristus. A very concise one. But suppose, my dear, you had met with any of the Bucks, the Bloods, or the Buffs, how would you have escaped their attacks?

Cleora. Why, I would have set my arms a-kimbo, and looked as fierce as they. Those sort of squires are never bold but to the fearful.

Finding, by their talking together in this gay manner, that they continued in perfect good-humour with each other, I thought I had no business to be an eves-dropper any longer, and was going to quit the place where I had stood; when, just as I had taken it into my head to do so, two gentlemen came down the walk; one of whom, in passing by the bench, stopped short, looked earnestly at Cleora, started, made a low bow, and then went on. She returned the salute, but with a confusion impossible to be expressed. She blushed; she trembled through every joint; her fan fell out of her hand; and she was ready to sink herself upon the seat. A less observing husband than Aristus must have taken notice of this sudden change; but the alarm it gave his jealous heart, was such as compelled him to be speechless for some moments. Cleora in vain endeavoured to recompose herself; all the efforts she made to suppress or to conceal her agitations, rendered them but the more violent, and consequently the more visible. Aristus, at last, broke silence with these words—

Aristus. You seem disordered, Madam. The sight of these gentlemen has had a strange effect upon you.

Cleora. I was a little surprized at the sight of one of them. But that is not all: I am not well.

Aristus. I see you are not, either in mind or body. My coming was unlucky. Had I been absent, you would doubtless have retained your former gaiety. But this is no place to expatiate on the cause of your disorder: I will get one of the soldiers to call a chair; 'tis fit you should go home.

He waited not to hear what answer she would make, but rose hastily up, and spoke to one who was not upon duty. The fellow ran to do as he was desired, and presently returned with a chair. While he was gone, Cleora had recovered herself enough to say to Aristus—'I perceive you are beginning to entertain sentiments to my disadvantage; 'but have patience till we get home, 'and I shall easily make this matter 'clear.' As he was putting her into the chair, she added—'You will follow presently.' To which he replied—'I shall not be long after you; 'though I believe your own meditations, at this time, will be more 'agreeable to you than the company of 'a husband.'

I perceived very plainly, by the countenance of Aristus, that a storm was gathering in his breast, which I doubted not would break forth in thunder. I could not help also being of opinion, that there were some appearances, on the part of Cleora, not much to her advantage. I thought, however, that the best way to form a true judgment of the accidents of that morning, were to see them when they were together; so forbore following either of them, and restrained my impatience till near the hour in which they usually dined, as being the most likely time to find Aristus at home. On my coming to their house, I found the door open, and a footman, in a laced livery, sitting on a bench in the hall, as waiting for an answer to some message he brought. I went directly up to the dining-room; no person being there, I passed on to Cleora's apartment, and found her writing at her bureau. A letter lay open before her, containing these lines—

'TO CLEORA.

'MADAM,

'I Heard not of your marriage till some 'weeks after it was consummated; 'and when I did, the hurry of my affairs, being then just going to Paris, 'prevented my congratulating you upon 'it. I returned to England but three 'days since; and the first enquiry I 'made, was concerning your health 'and place of abode: but the answers 'I received to these interrogatories were

'mingled with some other informa-
'tions, which make me not quite sure
'that a visit from me might not give
'offence to that happy gentleman who
'is now your husband. I would not
'therefore take the liberty of waiting
'on you till I had first received your per-
'mission. It is a blessing I ardently
'long for; but, whether proper for you
'to grant or not, beg you will believe
'that I am, with an esteem too justly
'grounded for change of circumstances
'to alter, Madam, your most faithfully
'devoted, and most humble servant,

'LEANDER.'

The answer given by Cleora to the above billet was as follows—

'SIR,

'THAT I still retain a place in your
'remembrance, demands my
'grateful acknowledgments; and am
'sorry to tell you, that it is at this dis-
'tance only I can pay my thanks. It
'is easy for me to guess of what nature
'the informations you mention have
'been, and think myself obliged so far
'to confirm the truth of them, as to
'let you know the favour you intended
'me is wholly improper for me to re-
'ceive; and to desire you will attempt
'no future correspondence of any kind
'with her who is no longer mistress of
'her actions, but who must always
'preserve in her heart the best wishes
'for your welfare.

'CLEORA.'

Having sealed this, she called her maid Betty, and bid her deliver it to the man who waited for it; then took up Leander's letter, and read it two or three times over to herself, with very disturbed emotions; after which, she rose hastily from the posture she had been in, whether with a design to burn, or lay it carefully up, I cannot pretend to say, for her husband that instant flew into the room, and snatched it out of her hand. She shrieked; and, in my opinion, very imprudently endeavoured to wrest it from him. His stature, as well as strength, being much superior to hers, he held it at arm's length, and read the contents, in spite of all her weak efforts to hinder it; which done, he clapped it into his pocket, stamped, bit his lips, measured the room with wild unequal paces, still as he turned darting revengeful glances at the trembling Cleora. These, and other such like frantick gestures, introduced the following dialogue between them—

Cleora. What is there in that letter can have moved you thus?

Aristus. Was it not sent by him whose sight this morning threw you into such disorder?

Cleora. I was a little surprized at the sudden appearance of a person I had not seen for a long time; but know not that the disorder I was in proceeded from that cause.

Aristus. He knew it did, and I suppose sent you this by way of consolation.

Cleora. You put an odd interpretation on his words, as well as on my looks. Is this, Aristus, the effect of all those promises you so lately made?

Aristus. When I made those promises, I was so weak as to believe there was a possibility of your being faithful: but am now convinced of what you are; know that you are the most vile of women, and I the most accursed of men!

Cleora. You make yourself indeed the one, by your unjust suspicions; but no action of mine shall ever prove I am the other.

Aristus. Death and furies! Did I not meet the villain's servant with a letter from you in his hand!

Cleora. Suppose you did. I wrote to forbid his coming hither.

Aristus. Yes, and no doubt to appoint a place more convenient.

Cleora. 'Tis false; nor would the man whom your suspicions wrong me with, harbour a thought to the prejudice either of my virtue or my reputation. No, if you had half his honour, or his love, I should not be the wretch I am.

Aristus. Then you confess he loves you?

Cleora. He loved me once; and though Heaven thought fit to break off our intended union, I believe still preserves an esteem for me.

Aristus. As you for him. Hell and vengeance! Dare you avow this to my face! Have I then only the leavings, the refuse, of a beloved rival! Audacious strumpet!

In speaking this, he struck her so violent a blow over the face, that the blood gushed from her nose and mouth; on which she cried out—'Villain! there

'wanted

' wanted but this to prove the baſeneſs
' of thy abject ſoul! But think not the
' name of wife ſhall make me tamely
' bear ſuch uſage; no, if the laws of
' England ſhould refuſe me juſtice, I
' will fly to the remoteſt corner of the
' earth, and ſeek refuge among the leſs
' barbarous Hottentots, rather than live
' beneath the roof with ſuch a mon-
' ſter!'

How Ariſtus would have behaved on this is uncertain; a ſervant that moment entered the room, and told him that a gentleman, who it ſeems he had ſent for that morning upon buſineſs, was now come to wait upon him. Whatever was in the mind of this diſtracted huſband, he had no farther opportunity of ſhewing it at preſent; and only giving a furious look at Cleora, and muttering ſome inarticulate curſes between his teeth as he went out, left her to ruminate on what was paſt. She no ſooner found herſelf alone, than ſhe rung the bell for her maid, who appeared quite frighted on ſeeing her lady in ſuch a condition. The girl's exclamations made her turn to the looking-glaſs; and the injury that had been done her, it is probable, gave ſtrength to her reſentment, and ſhe reſolved to put in immediate execution what ſhe had threatened Ariſtus with doing.

Betty had lived with her before her marriage, and was no ſtranger to the love that had been between her and Leander. The enraged fair-one, therefore, ſcrupled not to make her the confidant of the motive of this laſt quarrel with her huſband, and the intention ſhe had of quitting him for ever; then, after conſidering a little in what manner ſhe ſhould manage this affair, gave the following orders—' I would have you take a ' hackney-coach for expedition ſake, ' and go to Mrs. Clip's the tirewoman: ' I know ſhe lets lodgings. If ſhe has ' any apartment ready, hire it directly; ' but if her houſe happens to be full, do ' not return without procuring one for ' me in ſome other; for I am determined ' to go this very day, and ſhall think ' every moment an age till I am out of ' this deteſted place.'

While the maid was gone, Cleora ſet about packing up her cloaths and jewels; which ſhe did with ſuch adroitneſs and diſpatch, that in leſs than an hour every thing belonging to her was ready to be ſent away. In a little more than that time Betty returned, and told her that Mrs. Clip's firſt floor being let, ſhe had agreed for the parlours, which ſhe ſaid were very handſome, and ſhe believed her ladyſhip would approve of, at leaſt till a better apartment could be provided. Cleora was ſatisfied; another coach was called to carry her, and the maid followed in the other with the luggage. Ariſtus was all this time abroad: he went out with the gentleman who had called on him, and his abſence very much facilitated the execution of his wife's deſign; for, had he been at home, 'tis certain that either his love or anger, or perhaps a mixture of both, would have attempted to detain her. But what effects the ſteps ſhe had taken produced, both on the one and the other, muſt be left to the ſucceeding chapter.

CHAP. III.

IN WHICH THE CONSEQUENCES OF CLEORA'S ELOPEMENT ARE FULLY SHEWN, AND AN END PUT TO THAT SUSPENSE WHICH THE FORMER PAGES MAY HAVE EXCITED IN THE MIND OF EVERY INTERESTED AND CURIOUS READER.

I Staid ſome hours at the houſe of Ariſtus, expecting to be witneſs of ſomething extraordinary in his behaviour, when he ſhould be told of the departure of his wife; but he returning not in all that time, I grew weary of the tedious attendance, and quitted my poſt in order to go home; for as to Cleora, I had no thoughts of viſiting her in her new apartment till next morning. It not being late, however, I took it into my head to call at a great coffee-houſe in my way, and lucky was it for the gratification of my curioſity that I did ſo. I found Ariſtus there; he was ſitting at a table, in one corner of the room, ſome diſtance from the other company, with paper and a ſtandiſh before him. I advanced with all the ſpeed I could towards him, and ſaw him write the following billet to Leander—

' SIR.

' YOU are a villain, and have en-
' deavoured to wrong me in a
' point too tender to be forgiven. I

'need only tell you that I am the husband of Cleora, to inform you both 'of what I mean, and what sort of satisfaction my honour demands from 'you, which I expect you will give me 'to-morrow morning at seven, in the 'Artillery Ground, Tothill Fields. 'The bearer has orders to wait your 'answer to.

'ARISTUS.'

This he sent by a porter to the Braund's Head in Bond Street; at which house, as I afterwards discovered, he had, with a good deal of pains, got intelligence that Leander constantly supped every night. I waited behind Aristus, with an impatience, perhaps, not inferior to his own, to see what reply Leander would make to the above, till the porter returned from him with these lines—

'SIR,

'THOUGH your telling me that 'you are the husband of Cleora, 'cannot make me in the least sensible 'how I deserve the name of villain, 'yet I can easily guess at the satisfaction you require, and shall not fail to 'meet you at the hour and place appointed, in hopes of being better informed for what imaginary cause you 'treat in this manner a person who neither knows, or ever had any design 'to injure you.

'LEANDER.'

Aristus, after having read this, staid no longer than to drink one dish of coffee. As I perceived he turned that way which led to his own house, I could not forbear accompanying him thither; and I believe, by what I have to relate, the reader will think I had no reason to repent the pains I took. He was no sooner entered, than he asked hastily for his wife, doubtless with an intention to renew his reproaches, and give a vent to some part of the fury he was possessed of: but never certainly did astonishment work a more strange effect. On being told she was gone, and the manner in which she went, the sudden shock at once deprived him both of speech and motion; his face grew pale as ashes; his eyes were fixed in a stupid stare; and had he been buried for three days, scarce could he have appeared more the ghost of what he was the moment before. His deadened faculties by degrees reviving, the first use he made of them was to call up all the servants; asking first one, and then another, why she was suffered to depart, why they did not stop her. To which they answered, that having no order from him, they durst not presume so far; and besides, they knew nothing of her going till they saw the coaches at the door, and the portmanteaus carried out.

He next demanded to what place she had directed herself to be carried: but both Cleora and her maid having taken the precaution to give no order to the coachman till they were got some distance from the house, no one of them was able to give him any information; on which he sent them out of the room, not without some curses on their indolence in not following the coaches: then, thinking himself alone, began to give a loose to the dictates of his despair and rage in these expressions—'Then she is 'lost, for ever lost to me! for if she 'should return, my honour, after this, 'would not permit me to receive her. 'Why did I ever marry! What demon tempted me to become the husband of a woman whom I knew all 'mankind must love as well as I! 'Curse on my fond passion! curse on 'her fatal charms! Oh the deceiver! 'the vile hypocrite! There is no longer 'any room for doubt; her flight has 'proved her guilt. Revenge is now 'my sole relief: she for the present has 'escaped my reach, but I will stab her 'image in Leander's heart. Oh that it 'were morning!'

While uttering the latter part of this exclamation, he flew about the room as if totally bereft of reason; till his spirits, at length exhausted by the violence of his rage, sunk into the contrary extreme, that of dejection: he folded his arms, sighed, and, with tears bursting from his eyes, cried out—'Oh Cleora, 'Cleora! lovely, perfidious wanton, to 'what hast thou reduced me!' He then threw himself down on a settee, with groans like those which issue from the breasts of men dying in their full vigour; whence, after having lain some time, he started up, saying—'I will 'think no more! To hear of my distractions would but soothe her pride.'

He seemed now a little more composed, and called for something to eat; but, on it's being brought, could not put

one

one morsel into his mouth; so rose from table, and went up to his own chamber; where I did not think fit to pursue him, as having already seen enough to make me know the present disposition of his mind. It was my full intention, however, to go in the morning to the Artillery Ground, to be spectator of the combat between him and Leander; but was disappointed, by sleeping beyond the time they were to meet. This a little vexed me; but I consoled myself with the thoughts of being able to hear the event, by calling some part of the day at the house of Aristus, for I knew not where Leander lived. But my concern for Cleora carrying me first to her lodgings, there I got all the intelligence I wanted. I found that lady, as I believe, just risen from her bed, for she was in a loose, entire deshabille. She seemed very pensive, and had the marks of her jealous husband's resentment still flagrant on her lovely face. Betty was not with her when I came in, but entered immediately after, and surprized her with these words—

Betty. Oh, Madam, I have the strangest thing to tell you!—Who does your ladyship think I have seen?

Cleora. Nay, I know not. Who, pray?

Betty. The very footman that brought your ladyship the letter yesterday, and put my master into such a rage. I was never so confounded in my whole life.

Cleora. Confounded, for what?—Where did you see him?

Betty. In the kitchen, Madam. When I went down, just now, to put on the tea-kettle for breakfast, who should I see there but him talking to Mrs. Clip! His master lodges here in the apartment above.

Cleora. Good Heaven! Was there ever so unfortunate an accident! To come to lodge in the same house with the man whom at present it most behoves me to avoid! Do you think he knows you?

Betty. O yes, Madam. Your ladyship may remember it was I that took the letter from him, and carried down your answer. I warrant he knows me again; but if he did not, I find Mrs. Clip has been babbling to him about your ladyship, for I heard her mention your name as I was upon the stairs.

Cleora. Sure I was infatuated not to forbid that woman telling any body I was here. But I must remove immediately: it would be my utter ruin if my husband, or any of his friends, should hear I had lain in this house but only one night.

Betty. Very true, indeed, Madam; and as soon as your ladyship has had your breakfast, I will go out and get another lodging.

Cleora. Don't talk of breakfasting, I will have you go this instant; I am distracted to think where I am.

Betty. Dear Madam, I beg you will not put yourself into such a hurry of spirits. It seems Leander is gone abroad; and these gay gentlemen, when once they go out, seldom return all day. I will engage your ladyship shall be removed before he knows any thing of your being here.

Cleora. You talk like a fool. As he went out so early, he is the more likely to come home to dress; therefore get away. I would not have him see me here for all the world.

Betty, finding her lady so resolute, made no farther delays, but went into the next room, and huddled on her capuchin and gloves; which done, she returned, and asked what part of the town would be most agreeable to her; to which Cleora replied, that all situations were alike to her, but should chuse some one or other of the streets that turned out of the Strand, as she must be private for a while, and had fewest acquaintance that way; and then bid her send Mrs. Clip to her. The maid went out, and Mrs. Clip entered the room presently after. Cleora told her the circumstances of her affairs laid her under a necessity of removing from her house, and intreated she would not make mention of her having been there to any one who might enquire for her. The other expressed a good deal of concern for losing so good a lodger, and assured her of observing secrecy in the point she desired.

While they were talking, a loud knocking at the door made Mrs. Clip run to the parlour window; and seeing who it was, cried out—'Bless me, 'tis 'Leander! His cloaths me all bloody, 'and his arm in a scarf! He has been 'fighting, that's certain! I thought 'there was some such thing in hand, by 'his going out so early this morning. 'I beg

'I beg your ladyſhip's pardon; I muſt 'run and ſee if he wants any thing I 'can do for him.'

Cleora was too much confounded at the name of Leander, and the condition ſhe heard he was in, to offer to detain her; and, after ſhe was gone, fell into a profound reverie, which held her for half an hour; and perhaps might have done ſo longer, if ſhe had not been rouzed from it by a gentle knock at the parlour-door: but how greatly was ſhe ſurprized when, on her calling to the perſon to come in, ſhe ſaw Leander enter! ſhe ſtarted, trembled, and, with a faultering voice, ſpoke thus to him—

Cleora. Oh, Sir, a viſit from you is wholly improper at this time!

Leander. I hope not ſo, Madam; ſince I would not have ſo far intruded, but to acquaint you with ſomething which it may be convenient for you to know. I have ſeen your huſband this morning.

Cleora. Oh my foreboding heart! I dread to aſk the conſequence of ſuch a meeting!

Leander. You need not, Madam. Ariſtus is unhurt, and I bear only one ſlight token of his intent to take my life.

Cleora. Then you have fought?

Leander. It was with the utmoſt regret I drew my ſword againſt the huſband of Cleora. But be pleaſed, Madam, to peruſe this billet; and you will ſee the neceſſity that compelled me to it.

With theſe words he preſented to her the challenge he had received the night before from Ariſtus; which, as ſoon as ſhe had looked over, ſhe returned to him again, ſaying—

Cleora. Unjuſt Ariſtus! But I thank Heaven nothing worſe has enſued.

Leander. Heaven, Madam, has indeed alone the praiſe; ſince it was not to any ſuperior ſkill of mine, or to any generoſity in my antagoniſt, that I am indebted for my preſervation, but to a kind of miracle.

Cleora. As how? Pray, Sir, inform me.

Leander. I know not, Madam, whether I can make you ſenſible how the thing happened, as your ſex are ignorant of the terms made uſe of in the deſcription of ſuch rencounters; but I will do my beſt. When firſt we met, I would have endeavoured to reaſon him out of a miſtake ſo injurious to you and his own peace of mind, as well as to myſelf; but he refuſed to liſten to any arguments I had prepared, and flew upon me with the rage of an incenſed lion. By the manner of his fighting, I eaſily perceived he came with a reſolution either to kill or be killed; ſo, as I was deſirous of avoiding both the one and the other, I only ſtood upon my defence, and parried the puſhes he made; though, in aiming at my breaſt, he ſeveral times expoſed his own. The moderation I obſerved but enraging him the more, he attempted to cloſe with me; and in that action I received a wound in my right-arm, a little above the bend, which hindered me from making any uſe of that wriſt, I ſhifted my ſword into the other hand; ſaying to him, at the ſame time—'You ſee, Sir, I am 'diſabled; we muſt leave the deciſion 'of this affair till ſome other time.'—'No,' cried he, 'I am not ſo weak as 'to loſe the advantage I have gained.' On this I retreated ſome paces; and then redoubling his attacks, the awkward oppoſition I could now make would not have protected me one moment longer, if, in the very criſis of my fate, when the point of his weapon was juſt ready to tranſfix me to the earth, we had not fortunately been ſeparated. Some people, whoſe windows had a proſpect of the Artillery Ground, ſaw the firſt of our engagement; and making all the haſte they could to prevent the threatened miſchief, arrived in the inſtant I have mentioned, beat down the ſword of Ariſtus, and placed themſelves before me as a ſhield.

Cleora. Pray, Sir, what then did Ariſtus do?

Leander. Walked ſullenly away, purſued by the reproaches of my deliverers till he was out of hearing; and it was with much ado that I prevailed with them to offer him no farther inſults. But, Madam, while I am giving you the hiſtory of my ill-treatment, I fear it is in your power to preſent me with a more ſhocking detail of the cauſe that brought you hither.

Cleora. It is ſuch a one, indeed, as, if the world be not as unjuſt as Ariſtus, will eaſily abſolve me for the reſolution I have taken of never living with him more. But it would happen very unlucky for my reputation, ſhould it be known I have ſeen you even this once; I therefore

therefore intreat that, after I go hence, you will not think of making me any future visits.

Leander. Though it is hard to suffer for the faults of another, yet, Madam, be assured I shall never desire any thing that may give Aristus a pretence for his ill-treatment. I flatter myself, however, that the remembrance of our former tenderness is not so totally obliterated, but that friendship may subsist between us: you may, at least, permit me to write to you sometimes.

Cleora. I know not whether even that would not be too much.

Leander. Neither virtue, nor duty to the best of husbands, could set down as a fault the favour I request; and, to prevent all misinterpretations of our innocent correspondence, I shall take such precautions as will keep it a secret from all the world.

Cleora. Well, Sir, I cannot refuse this proof of your compassion for me, and think I ought not to deprive myself of any innocent consolation under my present affliction; you may therefore be assured, that I shall receive and answer your letters, with all the satisfaction a woman in my circumstances can or ought to feel.

He was going to make some reply, when Betty returned from her errand. She was a little surprized at seeing him there; and said nothing till her lady, impatient to know the success of what she had been about, spoke thus to her—

Cleora. Well, Betty, have you done the business I sent you on?

Betty. Yes, Madam. Please to step into the next room, and I will give you an account.

Cleora. No, you may tell me here. I dare trust this gentleman's discretion.

The maid then informed her that she had agreed for lodgings at the house of a great taylor, whom she named, in Norfolk Street. On this Cleora desired Leander to retire; saying she must get herself ready, for she was determined to depart immediately. He offered not to oppose her design; but though the leave they took of each other now was accompanied with the greatest respect on his side, and reserve on her's, I could easily perceive that this interview had rekindled in both their hearts those flames of affection they before had felt.

After he had left the room, Cleora's things not having been unpacked, there needed little preparation for her going. She sent for Mrs. Clip, and made her a handsome present for the trouble she had given her house; but finding her a tattling woman, acquainted her not with that to which she was removing. I saw both the mistress and maid, with all their luggage, depart in the same manner they had come; but did not accompany them to their new habitation, as I could not promise myself with finding any thing there as yet worthy my enquiry. The discourse of the town afterwards informed me, that Cleora had employed a lawyer, and was soliciting either to have her whole fortune returned, or an annual allowance to the amount of the interest of it. Aristus was at first refractory to all propofals of this nature; but all his friends, and his mother in particular, joining their persuasions, he at last was prevailed on to sign articles of a final separation; by which it was agreed, that she should have a pension of three hundred pounds a year during his life; and, in case he died before her, her whole fortune restored.

I frequently called upon Cleora, and found that, during this negociation with her husband, she kept her resolution of not seeing Leander; but that affair was no sooner over, than he visited her every day: the consequence of which may easily be guessed at, and was in a short time proved; for they went to Paris together, and still continue to reside there. This last action of Cleora's has doubtless given the world room to believe she had not been wronged by the suspicions of Aristus; but whoever is of this opinion does her a great deal of injustice. The Invisible Spy is a witness for her, that her inclinations were virtuous, her disposition grateful and sincere; and, had she been treated with that confidence a good wife ought to have been, no temptation would have had the power to have made her otherwise. Let all husbands, therefore, beware how they provoke, by ill-usage and distrust, the fate they would avoid; and observe this maxim of the poet's—

'He that would keep the fair-one true and
'kind,
'By love must clap a padlock on her
'mind.'

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

PRESENTS A FULL VIEW OF THE MUCH CELEBRATED SABINA, IN AN IMPARTIAL DESCRIPTION OF HER PERSON AND CHARACTER; WITH SOME PARTICULARS IN RELATION TO HER TWO AMOURS, AND THE CONSEQUENCES WHICH ATTENDED AN ASSIGNATION WITH HER FAVOURITE YOUNGLY.

THAT children do not always behave in the same manner with their parents, is not so much owing to their being born with different propensities, as to their education, and the company they may happen to fall into, at an age when nature is most liable to be swayed by example. We often see the most virtuous couples unhappy in a degenerate offspring, but we rarely see good branches sprout from a vicious stock. An evil disposition may be corrected by advice, by persuasion, by example; and a good one perverted by the same means: but when a person is so unfortunate as to be descended from base and wicked parents, is brought up under them, is witness of all their actions, and has companions of the same cast, it is scarce possible that such a one can have a mind enriched with any noble or moral principles.

What other could the once-doating, deceived Germanicus, expect in his marriage with Sabina, than the vexations he has fatally experienced? Can all the beauties of her person now make atonement for the blemishes of her mind? No; he rather curses than admires those charms that drew him in, and wishes himself any thing, so he were not a husband. Yet ask him why he married, he will tell you he married a woman of fortune, quality, and an uncommon share of beauty. All this is true; but a man not blinded by passion, would have examined by what means the two former were obtained; and, above all, what sort of disposition was hid beneath the varnish of an outside loveliness. Was not her family amongst the lowest rank, till one of them raised himself to opulence by actions which ought to have brought him to a gibbet; and, instead of ennobling his posterity, entailed on them perpetual infamy? Was she not trained up under a mother whose bad conduct has been equally notorious? Was she not, from her most early years, soothed in every vanity, pampered in every luxury, and taught to think that appetites and passions were never given but to be indulged?

Could Germanicus be ignorant of these glaring truths? If he were not, yet rashly ventured on so unpromising a union, who can pity the misfortunes, the disquiets, the disgrace, it has involved him in? The many proofs she gave of too warm an inclination before marriage, as also several of the many amours she had after she became a wife, I shall pass over: the first that made any great noise was that with Miramour, perhaps owing to the manner of it's commencement; which he thinking himself under no obligation to conceal, has since made no secret of in all companies whenever her name comes upon the carpet.

This gentleman had a mistress, who, on account of a certain haughtiness in her temper and behaviour, he called Roxana. He supported her in so genteel a manner, that, had her reputation been equal to her appearance, she might have been entitled to the best company. Character, however, was the least thing considered by Sabina in the choice of her acquaintance. She accidentally met with this lady at a milliner's, fell into discourse with her, liked her, invited her to her house, and there soon grew a great intimacy between them. That Roxana was kept by Miramour was no secret to the town, nor did she attempt to make any of it to Sabina; on the contrary, she talked freely to her of their amorous correspondence. But how dangerous is it for one woman to boast too much of the perfections of her lover, to another no less sanguine in her constitution? Sabina, who had often seen Miramour without taking any notice of him, now became so fired with the rapturous description given of him by his mistress, that she instantly became her rival, and languished to experience in reality that happiness which the other had given her so high an idea of. As she never took any thing of this nature into her head without attempting to accomplish it, and had no regard to decorum in the

manner

manner of her doing so, she sent a billet to him by a porter, containing these lines—

'SIR,

'IF your attachment to the charms of 'your kept mistress makes you 'not look on the rest of womankind as 'insipid creatures, the invitation this 'brings you will not be unwelcome. 'A woman of quality, young, and in 'most men's eyes handsome, has found 'something in you that excites in her 'the desire of a private interview, and 'to that end will call on you this even-'ing about seven, at White's; till when 'must remain, with a great deal of im-'patience,

'Your INCOGNITA.'

The messenger who carried this had strict orders not to tell from whom it came: curiosity, however—for it could be called no other passion as yet—made Miramour punctual to the time, nor was Sabina less so. He had not waited many minutes before she came. On his coming into the coach, he found her face entirely hid under her hood; which she told him, laughing, he must not expect to see, till they were in a place more proper for him to give her proof how agreeable it was to him. On this he ordered the coachman to drive to an adjacent tavern; where being shewn into a private room, the lady soon threw off her disguise. He had not enough depended on the character she had given of herself, not to be surprized and transported on finding Sabina in the person of his incognita; and expressed the sense he had of the honour she did, and the happiness he hoped their meeting would bestow on him, in terms so warm and so passionate, as infinitely charmed her. They passed some hours together to their mutual satisfaction; nor parted without an appointment to see each other the next day: but Sabina, not thinking it safe to come often to so publick a place as a tavern, undertook to provide a more proper scene for the continuance of their intrigue.

As indolent as this lady is in most other affairs, it must be confessed that no woman was ever more punctual, or more indefatigable, in every thing relating to love. On consulting with a female acquaintance, who had been often necessary on such occasions, she was advised by her to hire a private lodging by the quarter, in some obscure nook of the town, to which she might retire whenever she had a mind, as it would be always ready, and neither herself nor the friends she should bring with her be taken any notice of. Sabina highly approving of what she said, the project was put in immediate execution. The woman took upon herself the accomplishment of what she had proposed, and easily found a place every way suitable for the business it was designed. The chamber was neat, spacious, and well furnished; there was a back-door to the house, through which any one might slip out in case of any danger of discovery; and the landlady knew perfectly well the decorum she ought to observe in regard to her guests. The heroine of this adventure was very well pleased with the accommodation procured for her; and having got this recess, which, according to the French, she used to call her *petit maison*, henceforward never met Miramour at any other place.

But there was one thing I forgot to mention in giving the character of this lady, which is the uncertainty of her temper. She is no less inconstant than she is amorous; and changes her lovers almost as often as she does her cloaths, and never keeps either till they are worn out: a new friend, like a new fashion, is always charming to her; but a very little time serves to make her equally grow weary of both. She loved Miramour till she saw Youngly; but there was something in the person and conversation of this last gentleman, that making reason coincide with passion, it is not to be wondered at that she gave him the preference; and a woman of a less mutable disposition might have been easily absolved for transferring her affections to an object so much more worthy than the late engrosser of her heart.

On her first acquaintance with him, she made advances to him; which he is too much a man of pleasure to resist from any fine woman: he returned those of Sabina in a manner which made her think him as much devoted to her as she could wish; and it was not long before she gave him an invitation to drink tea with her at her private apartment, where she told him they might laugh away an hour without interruption. He took the hint, and flew to the place of rendezvous; where it was not to be

doubted but he found all the welcome he could wish or expect from the obliging fair. They had many interviews; but Youngly having by some accident heard of her intrigue with Miramour, he not only frequently reproached her with it, but also was far from feeling for her that affection in his heart, which otherwise her beauty might have inspired him with.

In the mean time Roxana, who from the commencement of Miramour's acquaintance with Sabina had seen him less often than she had been accustomed, and had also some other reasons to suspect a decrease of affection, began presently to imagine some new face had supplanted her. She complained to him of his unkindness, but he absolutely denied having given her any cause, and made a thousand excuses for his late behaviour: but this did not satisfy her, she was not to be deceived in matters of which she was so good a judge; and convinced that she had a rival, bent her whole thoughts on discovering the person. By an emissary whom she employed to watch Miramour wherever he went, she soon found out the place where he met the object of his new attachment; but as that lady was carried into the house in a chair, with the curtains close drawn, was still as far as ever from knowing the face that had undone her. Upon enquiry among the neighbours, she was informed that the house was noted for giving reception to people who liked each other more than they were willing the world should know; and this put a stratagem into her head, which was crowned with all the success she could wish or hope; not only for exploring what at present was a mystery to her, but also for being amply revenged on her fair rival.

The mistress of Miramour knew the town long before she knew him, and was not unacquainted with the customs of such houses. She went one morning to the governante of this; and, after saying she had been recommended by a person who knew her, told her she should be glad to have a chamber, to which she might sometimes come with a friend whom it was not convenient for her to see at home. The old gentlewoman replied, that her best room was rented by the quarter, by a lady who came often thither; and that the next, which was the only one she had to spare, she feared would be too small. Roxana cried she did not regard how small it was, provided it was otherwise commodious. On this she was shewed up to it; and finding it was divided from the other only by a thin wainscot partition, presently agreed for it; giving the old woman so good a premium in hand, that she was highly satisfied with her new incumbent.

Having accomplished so far of her design as to get possession of the very next room to that where her lover and his new mistress met, she began to consider, that to go thither alone might raise some suspicions in the woman of the house, and was a little at a loss what man she should take with her, and make pass for a gallant; as, whoever went, he must be made the confidante of the whole affair. At last she pitched upon the fellow she had employed as a spy upon Miramour. His appearance, indeed, was very mean; but that she thought might not be regarded: accordingly she went the next day, accompanied by her pretended gallant. They were there some time before the hour in which he had told her he had seen Miramour go in, in order to prepare things for a more perfect discovery. This was done by the young fellow's boring holes through the wainscot, in so dexterous a manner, that they could see all over the room without being seen themselves, though they stood close to the orifice. No one, however, came that night; and the impatient Roxana was obliged to return home as dissatisfied as ever.

The next day she repaired thither again, attended as before, and met with the same disappointment; but on the third was more successful. She had not been many minutes in the chamber, when a rustling of silks upon the stairs made her know somebody was coming up; on which she ran hastily, without making any noise, to one of the peep-holes. But how great was her astonishment when she saw Sabina enter! Scarce could she refrain exclaiming aloud against the treachery of a woman who, after being made her confidante, had robbed her of the affections of her lover. But soon the current of her passion turned a different way; when, instead of Miramour, she saw Youngly push open the door, and throw himself into Sabina's arms; on which, withdrawing from her post—'You fool,' cried

cried she to her emissary, 'to what a 'fruitless labour have you exposed me! 'It is not Miramour that I have all this 'while paid you for following. How 'could you be so mope-eyed as to mis-'take him!'—'Nay, Madam,' replied the fellow, 'I am sure I know Mr. Mi-'ramour, and I will swear that it was him 'I saw come into this house, and pre-'sently after a lady in a chair, as I 'then told you.' Roxana knew not what to think of this, and said no more; but listening attentively to the conversation within, was presently assured by it that her agent had neither deceived her, nor had been deceived himself, as will appear by the following dialogue—

Sabina. My dear, dear Youngly, I hope you will now believe that I love you above all the world.

Youngly. I know you love me enough to make me happy, and I ought to content myself with the share I have in your affections.

Sabina. Do not talk of a share: by Heaven, you engross me all! my soul and all it's faculties are devoted to you.

Youngly. And yet the letter Miramour accidentally dropped in the Park, and I took up, flattered him with the same assurances you now give me.

Sabina. As I unfortunately played the fool with him before I saw you, it was necessary I should break with him by degrees.

Youngly. You had once, however, a real passion for him.

Sabina. No, it was all in imagination; I only fancied I loved him. You must know, that silly, vain creature, his kept mistress, was always filling my ears with stories of the violence of his affection for her; and it was more to shew him the difference between such a wretch and a woman of quality, than any extraordinary liking I had to his person, that induced me to grant him the favours I did.

This was enough to let the listening Roxana into the whole affair. It was with much ado she restrained herself from flying into the next room, and returning the contempt thrown upon her by the last words of Sabina; but just as she was at the door, and ready to burst in on the unsuspecting pair, a sudden thought made her turn back. 'All I 'can say to this perfidious woman,' cried she to herself, 'will avail me no-'thing; the wrongs I have received de-'mand a vengeance more compleat.' She then sat down again; and, calmly meditating on what she had to do, the fertility of her invention soon supplied her with the means of repaying, with interest, the double affront Sabina had given both to herself and Miramour, whom it is certain she loved with more sincerity than is commonly found among women of her profession. She staid till the lovers took their leaves of each other, and heard an appointment made between them to meet again on the ensuing Thursday.

Having fully perfected in her mind the design she soon after put in execution, she called for the woman of the house, and said to her—'Madam, I 'know not but some gentlemen may 'pass an hour or two with me here next 'Thursday. They may possibly come 'before me: but I desire you will give 'them admittance; and, to prevent mis-'takes, as the furniture of the room is 'yellow, they shall ask for the key of 'the yellow chamber.' The other replied, that she might depend on her punctuality in observing her commands. After which Roxana went away; but what she meant by the orders she had given must be left to the next chapter to explain.

CHAP. V.

CONTAINS THE CATASTROPHE OF AN ADVENTURE, WHICH THE AUTHOR THINKS FIT TO DECLARE IS INSERTED IN THESE LUCUBRATIONS LESS TO AMUSE HIS READER, THAN FOR THE SAKE OF SETTING IN A TRUE LIGHT THOSE FACTS WHICH SOME PEOPLE HAVE ARTFULLY ENDEAVOURED TO MISREPRESENT TO THE PUBLICK.

ROXANA being now fully furnished with materials for her revenge on Sabina, without exposing her beloved Miramour to the resentment of an injured husband, wrote to the latter, the next morning, in words to this effect—

'TO GERMANICUS.

'SIR,

'THIS brings you a very ungrateful 'piece of intelligence: but, in 'my opinion, whoever sees a person 'wronged, and conceals it, takes part 'in the offence; and, though innocent 'of the commencement of the crime, is 'accessary to the continuance of it. It 'would certainly be the utmost injustice, 'that you should be the last person to 'know what concerns yourself alone; 'and I therefore think it my duty to in-'form you of what chance has disco-'vered to me. Your wife, Sir, is false 'to your bed, and lavishes on Mr. 'Youngly all those favours which you 'have a right to engross. The guilty 'pair meet twice or thrice every week, 'at a lodging she rents by the quarter 'for that purpose. But to say your 'wife is guilty of so foul a crime, is do-'ing nothing, without putting it in 'your power to prove her so: the thing, 'Sir, is easy, if you will follow my di-'rections. The lovers have appointed 'to meet to-morrow, about seven, at 'their usual rendezvous; if you go at 'that time, or rather before it, to the 'third house on the left-hand in **** 'Lane, on your asking for Mrs. *****, 'who is the keeper of this private bro-'thel, and telling her you want the 'key of the yellow chamber, she will 'presently conduct you to a room ad-'joining to that which is the scene of 'your wife's loose pleasures. There are 'holes already bored through the wains-'cot, through which you may plainly 'discern all that passes. It is at your 'own option whether you will have any 'other witnesses of your wife's trans-'gression than your own eyes, and also 'how to behave towards her after de-'tection. I have discharged the dic-'tates of my conscience in giving you 'this information; and am, Sir,

'Your unknown Friend.'

'P. S. Be careful to drop no words 'that may give the woman of the 'house the least cause to suspect 'either who you are, or the motive 'of your coming.'

It is convenient I should now acquaint my reader, that all I have hitherto related of this story has come to my knowledge entirely by the report of the persons chiefly concerned in it, and without the least assistance from my Belt of Invisibility. What yet remains to be told, I have the testimony of my own eyes and ears to avouch. The many odd accounts I have heard, from time to time, in relation to Sabina's conduct, made me resolve to go one day to the house of Germanicus, in order to satisfy my curiosity with seeing in what fashion this couple behaved to each other.

The lady was abroad when I came, and I found him up in his dining-room, diverting himself with playing on the flute; but soon after rouzed from that amusement by the above letter being delivered to him by his man, saying it was brought by a fellow who the moment he had put it into his hands vanished like lightning from the door. The emotions with which he read it were very great, yet much less than might have been expected on such an occasion. He paused, then read again, examined every line with heedful eyes, and seemed extremely divided in his thoughts what credit he should give to the information: at last, said he to himself—'If any one had formed this con-'trivance, through a malicious design 'of ruining her reputation, or my peace 'of mind, they would certainly have 'taken other methods, and not, by 'pointing out the place, the hour, put 'it in my power to prove at once the 'falseness of the accusation.'

After this, he threw himself into an easy chair, leaned his head upon his hand, and in that posture continued musing for a considerable time; then seeming more resolved, started up and cried—'It is easy for me to make en-'quiry if there be such a house, if kept 'by a woman of the name mentioned 'in the letter, and what character it 'bears. Yet, why should I do this?—'No, it is better to follow the instruc-'tions given me, and be at once as-'sured. It shall be so. As Shake-'speare makes Othello say—

"I'll see before I doubt; when I doubt,
"prove:
"And on the proof there is no more but
"this—
"Away at once with love or jealousy."

He had scarce done repeating these lines, when Sabina came in, singing an Italian air. Germanicus endeavoured to

to recompose his countenance, but could not do it so well as not to make her take notice of the change, and ask if he were out of humour; to which he replied—

Germanicus. Out of humour, Madam? No, I have no cause; none in the world.

Sabina. I think not, indeed; but men will be peevish sometimes, cause or not cause.

Germanicus. I reserve all my gaiety for to-morrow, and would have you do so too. A kinsman of mine makes an entertainment, and has sent an invitation for us to be partakers of it.

Sabina. What, to-morrow?

Germanicus. Yes, my dear, to-morrow evening: so I desire you will not engage yourself elsewhere.

Sabina. Indeed I have engaged myself already to Lady Gape's assembly.

Germanicus. You have time enough, then, to send to excuse yourself from going.

Sabina. Indeed I shall not. I would not disappoint my dear Lady Gape for all the kinsmen in the world. But I would have you go: you may say I am not well, and then my absence cannot be taken amiss.

It was very plain to me, that Germanicus made this pretended invitation only as a trap to discover whether she had really any engagement on her hands that she would not be willing to break; and it is also as little to be doubted, but that her answers very much corroborated the contents of the epistle he had just received. He forced himself, however, to tell her, with a smile, that every thing should be as she would have it, and that he would no farther press her. Some company presently after coming in, I found there was nothing more to be learned at that time, so took the first opportunity of quitting the house; and went again, the next afternoon, in hopes of discovering something more.

On my arrival, the husband and wife were sitting together in the most seeming amicable manner. After some little time Germanicus rose up, and put on his hat and sword, in order, as he said, to go to his kinsman; on which Sabina, with a great deal of complaisance, said to him—

Sabina. You will not walk, sure, my dear! Have you ordered the horses to be put to?

Germanicus. No, my dear; I leave the coach for you.

Sabina. There is no occasion. I always chuse to go to these places in a chair.

Germanicus. That is as you please: but I shall walk, as I have three or four places to call at in my way to my cousin's; so farewel, my dear. I hope you will be as merry at the assembly, as I hope to be at the entertainment.

As I imagined Germanicus had something in his head more than I knew of, by his being so hasty to be gone, I followed him close at his heels, and found I had not been mistaken in my supposition. He went into a tavern, where two gentlemen, whom he had desired to meet him there, waited for him. The business he had with them, was to communicate the letter he had received from the unknown friend; and, after having considered a little on the matter, they agreed that they should all three go together; not only to prevent any indiscreet effects of his rage on the persons who wronged him, in case the affair should prove as the letter had represented, but also to be his witnesses, if he thought proper to bring it before a court of judicature. They staid till a little before seven; then went, according to the directions given by Roxana, and found every thing answered the description. They were shewn up into the yellow chamber: I still accompanied them; and made a fourth person, unfelt, as well as unseen, by any of them.

They had not been there above half an hour, before Sabina came into the next room; Youngly soon after joined her; and the much-injured husband, and his two friends, saw enough, from the peep-holes in the partition, to convince them of the truth of that information which had brought them thither. Difficult was it for Germanicus to restrain his fury on so shocking a spectacle; but his two friends reminding him that there was a much better way for him to shew his resentment, he was at length prevailed on to retire. They both went home with him, as did myself; resolving to see what farther events this night would produce. Sabina came not home till near two hours past midnight: but Germanicus had ordered that the door should not be opened; and, after her chairmen had knocked two or three times, he went himself to the parlour-window, and spoke to her in these terms—

Germanicus.

Germanicus. Pleaſe, Madam, to return from whence you came, or whereever elſe you ſhall think proper. My houſe ſhall no longer be the ſhelter of a proſtitute.

Sabina. What, is the man mad! Sure you have been drinking bad wine to-night!

Germanicus. No, Madam, the beſt I ever drank in my life; it has opened my eyes, and ſhewn me the viper I have ſo long cheriſhed in my boſom, and now throw off for ever. But I would not wiſh you to ſtay longer in the cold; you can have no entrance here; Mr. Youngly will doubtleſs afford you a part of his bed.

With theſe words he ſhut the window; and Sabina, finding herſelf detected, and that her huſband was reſolute, ordered her chair from the door; and after ſome little conſideration how to diſpoſe of herſelf, thought it beſt to take her huſband's advice, and return to the place from whence ſhe came, as it was the only aſylum to which ſhe could have recourſe at ſo unſeaſonable an hour.

In the ſeveral viſits I afterwards made to Germanicus, I perceived he behaved with much more moderation than ſome huſbands would have done. Philoſophy had taught him to ſupport with patience a misfortune which was irremediable; he contented himſelf with taking ſuch revenge as the laws of England have provided in theſe caſes. Youngly was ſummoned before a court of judicature, and a penalty inflicted on him for his offence; but it would have been larger, had it not been proved, by inconteſtible evidences, that he had not been the firſt who had ſeduced Sabina from her marriage-vows. As for the lady, ſhe is now abandoned and deſpiſed by both her lovers; and if there be a poſſibility that any thing can bring her to a juſt ſenſe of the faults ſhe has been guilty of, it muſt be the contempt ſhe is treated with by all degrees of people.

END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

THE

INVISIBLE SPY.

BOOK IV.

CHAP. I.

IN WHICH THE AUTHOR CONFESSES HAVING BEEN GUILTY OF PETTY LARCENY; BUT HOPES THAT IT MERITS FORGIVENESS FROM THOSE INTO WHOSE HANDS THIS WORK MAY FALL, AS THE CHIEF MOTIVE FOR COMMITTING IT WAS TO OBLIGE THE PUBLICK.

I Have been intimately acquainted with Belinda for a conſiderable time in my viſible capacity, yet never once took it into my head to make her a viſit under the cover of my Belt, till her return from Bath this laſt ſeaſon; nor perhaps had done it then, if I had not been told that ſhe ſuffered herſelf to be conducted to that place by a certain gentleman whom I thought it highly improper for her to continue any converſation with, as he was a married man, and the ſame Philander hereafter mentioned in ſome of Selima's letters. On my entering her apartment, I found her buſy with her waiting-maid in unpacking her baggage; which coming by the waggon, it ſeems had arrived in town but the night before. As I could promiſe myſelf but little entertainment from the aſſortment of ribbands, jewels, &c. I was thinking to quit the place, and return at a more fit ſeaſon; when the maid, pulling out a ſattin bag full of papers, aſked her where ſhe would have thoſe writings laid; on which Belinda turned her head that way, and replied—'They are a 'heap of letters I received at Bath, of 'no manner of conſequence. I have no 'room for ſuch rubbiſh; take and throw 'them all into the fire.'

The maid was juſt going to do as ſhe was bid, but was ſtopped by Belinda, who ſuddenly ſcreamed out—'Hold! 'hold! I had forgot, that one day, in 'a hurry, I ſtuffed two or three letters 'and poems of Philander's among them; 'and I would not have one line of that 'dear witty creature's deſtroyed for all 'the world. Pour them all out of the 'bag, and look on the names ſub-'ſcribed, that I may direct you how 'to ſeparate the wheat from the chaff.' The maid then threw them all down upon the carpet, and opened them one by one; which done, Belinda added—'You need ſearch no farther; I have 'found all Philander's letters and 'poems in this drawer; ſo cram toge-'ther all you have there, and thruſt them 'into

'into the fire.' This sentence was punctually executed, according to the best of the maid's belief; but the poor girl knew not there was an Invisible Thief, who stood close at her elbow, and while she turned her head another way, had the dexterity to preserve some part of the condemned cargo, and slip it into his pocket.

Selima at that time engrossed great part of the conversation in town. She was a young woman of no fortune, and few other endowments besides her beauty, of which, in the opinion of most people, she has an uncommon share; though to me there is a certain fierceness in her eyes, and a boldness diffused through all her features, which rob them of that loveliness which they would otherwise have. Such as she is, however, she captivated the hearts of two persons who might have carried their addresses much higher without danger of a refusal: the one is born to a title, and the other possessed of wealth which, whenever he pleases, may procure him one; and neither of them can be thought deficient in any of those qualifications which constitute the fine gentleman. Yet Selima was still unmarried; both her lovers were equally in suspence, and nobody could tell which, or whether either of them, would be the happy man. It is not therefore to be wondered at, that a person of my humour should be extremely desirous of being let into a secret which seemed so impenetrable, even to those who pretended to be most knowing in other things; nor that I gladly embraced an opportunity which bid so fair for the satisfaction of my curiosity, as the getting her letters into my possession, Belinda having said they contained the whole history of this affair.

Behold now my theft! Belinda's maid had no sooner laid down the packet, by her lady's orders, than I kept my eye constantly fixed upon it, till a convenient moment offered for conveying it from among the others, which I did with great adroitness. After this I staid no longer with Belinda, not doubting but I had now about me better materials for my entertainment, than any I could expect to be furnished with in her apartment, at least for the present.

The distance between Belinda's lodgings and my own seemed now to be twice as long as usual, though I believe I measured much fewer paces than ever I had done before, so great was my impatience to be at home, and examine the treasure I brought with me. To avoid confusion, I examined the dates of every letter, and shall present them to my readers in the order they were sent to her while at Bath.

LETTER I.

'DEAR BELINDA,

'I Received the favour of yours with 'a double satisfaction; first, as it 'brought me news of your safe arrival 'at that agreeable place, and that every 'thing in it answered your wishes and 'expectations; and secondly, as it assures me of your friendship, by the 'kind concern you are pleased to express for my welfare. As to my 'health, I have quite lost that ugly cough 'which so much persecuted me when 'you left London; but as to my affairs, 'they are still in the same fluctuating 'and unsettled condition as ever. Dorantes still continues his addresses, 'Vanucius does the same. How happy 'might I be if I was loved but by one 'of them!' but both equally pursuing 'me, impedes all the good fortune I 'might enjoy with either.

'You may remember how much my 'mamma was transported when Dorantes first declared himself my lover. 'Vanucius, though not quite dropped, 'was then little regarded either by myself or her: but now the case is altered; 'she charges me to treat both with an 'equal freedom; and, indeed, I think 'it would be highly impolitick to do 'otherwise. The truth is, Dorantes 'does not come so directly to the point 'as could be wished: his courtship is 'passionate, tender, and full of fire; he 'swears I am the idol of his soul, that 'he could not live without me, and that 'all his hopes are centered in being one 'day happy in possessing me; yet, 'among all these fine speeches, he seldom mentions marriage; and when 'he does, it is in so slight and evasive a 'manner, as to give me sometimes cause 'to fear his designs are rather on my 'heart than hand. If this should be 'his intention, and I were weak enough 'to have fixed my affection on him, 'how miserable should I be! But, 'thank Heaven, I have none of that 'soft folly in my composition by which

'I have

'I have seen so many of our sex misled; 'my ruling passions are interest and 'ambition; and I would not hesitate 'one moment to give myself to Vanu-'cius, if the rank and title of Do-'rantes did not tempt me to wait awhile 'the result of his pretensions.

'I was yesterday morning in the Mall 'with Vanucius: Dorantes was walk-'ing there with some company; he 'changed colour, and seemed in some 'agitation on meeting us together. 'This I looked upon as a good sign; 'but in the afternoon, when he came to 'visit me, and I expected he would either 'have complained of my indifference to 'him, or reproached me for the publick 'encouragement I had given his rival; 'he did neither, but behaved the whole 'time with all the calmness and insen-'sibility of a Stoick. I must confess, I 'was never more disappointed in all 'my life, as I had frequently seen him 'kindle into jealousy on a less occasion; 'and could not help thinking that the 'violence of his passion was in a great 'measure abated, according to this 'maxim of Mr. Dryden—

"Distrust in lovers is too warm a sun;
"But yet 'tis night in love when that is
"gone."

'On consulting with my mamma, I 'found she was of the same way of 'thinking; and it was agreed upon be-'tween us, not to suffer ourselves to be 'trifled with any longer, but that the 'next time Vanucius made an offer of 'his hand, I should accept it. But, 'my dear Belinda, this morning has 'put a stop to the resolution of last 'night. I was scarce out of bed, 'when I received from Dorantes the 'most passionate billet that ever was dic-'tated by the heart of man; occasioned, 'as he says, by dreaming he had me in 'his arms. If his love be half so im-'patient to have me there as he preten's 'it is, he will certainly be now more 'pressing to make me his own than hi-'therto he has been.

'My next, perhaps, may bring you 'the decision of my fate: mean time, I 'should be glad to hear what is doing 'at Bath, and what new conquests you 'have made there; for how much so-'ever you may be envied by some of 'your acquaintance, be assured that 'every thing that contributes to your 'satisfaction, will always afford a se-'cret pleasure to her who is, with the 'most perfect amity, &c.

'SELIMA.'

LETTER II.

'DEAR BELINDA,

'I Am sorry to tell you, that the per-'plexity of my own affairs has hin-'dered me from being inquisitive enough 'into those of other people, for me to 'be able to send you the intelligence 'you request; but as I datter myself, 'that what regards myself will be al-'ways most interesting to you, I shall 'give you a brief detail of what has 'happened to me in relation to Dorantes, 'since his last kind letter mentioned in 'my former.

'He came the same evening. The 'discourse he entertained me with was 'of a piece with his epistle, all love and 'transport. He begged I would favour 'him with my company to the theatre 'in Drury Lane, where he had already 'sent a servant to keep places in the 'box; I consented, and went with him 'in his chariot. The play was Romeo 'and Juliet: he applied all the tender 'things spoke by the former of these 'lovers to his own passion, and pressed 'my hand with a vehemence of fond-'ness, whenever he had an opportunity 'of doing so unperceived by the audi-'ence.

'I saw him again next day. We 'were alone together in the dining-'room; and my gown being a little 'more off my shoulder than ordinary, 'he laid his face upon my bare neck, 'crying—"Oh, I could dwell for ever "here!" On this I took courage to 'say to him—"Yet, Dorantes, when "once I become your wife, these ar-"dours will perhaps sink into a cold "indifference."—"No, my angel!" 'returned he, "desire will rather in-"crease by enjoyment of your person; "the sweets contained in this dear "frame are of too divine a nature ever "to satiate." In speaking these words, 'he catched me suddenly in his arms, 'held me to his bosom, and joined his 'lips to mine with so newhat, I thought, 'of an unbecoming warmth. I strug-'gled to get loose; and when I had 'done so, retired some paces from him, 'and said, with all the haughtiness I

'could assume—" Forbear these liber-
" ties, Sir, till authorized by law to
" take them." He asked my pardon,
'apologized for what he had done by
'the violence of his passion, and then
'sat down; but appeared more than or-
'dinarily pensive afterwards, spoke lit-
'tle, and made his visit much shorter
'than usual.

'On my acquainting my mamma with
'what had passed between us, she did not
'at all like it, and went directly to her
'old friend, you know who I mean, to
'be advised by him how to proceed in a
'circumstance at once so intricate and
'critical. He told her, that my father
'ought to appear in this business; that
'it was his place, and his alone, to de-
'mand of Dorantes an explanation of
'his designs in regard to the courtship
'he so long had made to his daughter.
'My mamma had always been of his
'opinion; but knowing the indolence
'of my father's temper, had forbore
'mentioning it to him: however, she
'urged it to him, but all she could say
'or offer has been ineffectual; his an-
'swer was, that he did not know how
'to speak to a person of Dorantes's qua-
'lity on any such matter; that he would
'not interfere in it, and we might act
'as we thought proper ourselves.

'This, you will own, is very vexa-
'tious; but there is no turning him out
'of his own way. Mamma is now re-
'solved, since there is no other remedy,
'to take the task upon herself, as soon
'as Dorantes comes to town: he is at
'present gone on a hunting-match with
'some gentlemen, but is expected to re-
'turn in two days at farthest, and we
'shall then see the event. For my part,
'my spirits are so much fatigued and
'harassed with this suspence, that there
'is but one thing hinders me from put-
'ting an immediate end to it by mar-
'rying with Vanucius. The persons
'of the men are equal to me; but, O
'Belinda! I am passionately in love with
'the title of Dorantes! Would he were
'half as much so with my person, he
'would not then delay one moment
'giving me the one in exchange for the
'other.

'The faithful Vanucius, whom I
'have flattered with the belief of not
'being indifferent to me, is every day
'soliciting me to fix a time to make him
'happy, while Dorantes seems to dally
'with my expectations; yet can I not
'resolve to reward the constant services
'of the one, nor to renounce for ever
'the charming hope of rank, pre-
'cedence, the thousand dear appen-
'dages of a woman of quality, which
'the other has it in his power to be-
'stow on me. But I will trouble you
'no farther, than to assure you, that in
'whatever station my fate shall place
'me, I shall be ever, with the best
'wishes for your happiness, &c.

'SELIMA.

'P. S. I am obliged to Philander
'for the part you tell me he takes
'in my concerns. Pray be so
'good as to make my grateful
'acknowledgments acceptable to
'him.'

LETTER III.

'DEAR BELINDA,

'I Would not let this post escape with-
'out writing. What I have now
'to say to you, though greatly to the
'purpose, must be comprized in a few
'words. I am engaged to go this
'evening with Dorantes, and some other
'company, on a party of pleasure, and
'am every moment expecting his lan-
'dau at the door, so can but just snatch
'time to inform you, that my mamma
'has talked to him on the affair in
'question, and that his answers have
'been conformable to our utmost wishes.
'Yes, I am now convinced that all my
'apprehensions were groundless, that
'he never meant to act otherwise than
'honourably with me: he has assured
'both her and myself, that every thing
'shall soon be settled for my future hap-
'piness. Rejoice with me, my dear
'creature! I have now a heart and
'head perfectly at ease; and nothing
'to employ my thoughts, but how to
'behave becoming of the dignity to
'which, I flatter myself, a few days
'will raise me. Farewel. The author
'of my joys is already come; they call
'me to receive him; and I can add no
'more, than that I am, as ever, with un-
'feigned regard, &c.

'SELIMA.'

LETTER

LETTER IV.

'DEAR BELINDA,

'LITTLE did I expect, and little 'is it in your power to imagine, 'what I have now to acquaint you with. 'So strange a reverse, so sudden, so 'shocking a revolution, sure never any 'woman but myself experienced! But 'I will keep you no longer in suspence: 'I have lost Dorantes, irrecoverably lost 'him! not through any mismanage-'ment of my own, nor any want of af-'fection in him, but through a previ-'ous, much worse, and more irreme-'diable accident. This is the sum of 'my misfortunes; I will now relate to 'you the particulars.

'He came to me the other day; and 'though the salutations he approached 'me with had their accustomed tender-'ness, yet I thought there was some-'what in his countenance, and the 'whole air of his deportment, very dif-'ferent from any thing I had ever seen 'in him before. He had not been in 'the room many minutes, before he told 'me that he had something of conse-'quence to impart to me, and desired I 'would order myself to be denied to 'whoever should happen to come. I 'readily did as he desired; after which, 'he drew his chair close to mine, sighed, 'and, looking me full in the face, sur-'prized me with these words—"My "dear Selima," said he, "I have de-"ceived you; have you love enough for "me to forgive it?"—"First let me "know the nature of your offence," re-'turned I. "'Tis death to me to de-"clare it," answered he; "yet can it "be no longer hid. I have imposed "upon you by a false pretence, pro-"mised what is not in my power to per-"form—I cannot marry you!"

'Judge, Belinda, of my confusion. 'But it is as impossible for you to con-'ceive, as it is for me to describe, what 'I felt in that dreadful moment. Scarce 'could a thunderbolt have transfixed 'me more: I had no breath, no voice, 'but to echo part of his last words—"Cannot marry! cannot marry!" cried 'I; and this I repeated several times 'over.

'He seemed all this time in very great 'agitations; and, after taking one of 'my hands, and tenderly pressing it to 'his lips—"Heaven knows," said he, "how earnestly I desired the union I "proposed! Gladly would I resign the "one half of those years fate has al-"lotted for my life, to have the other "blessed with the possession of my Se-"lima in the way she expects from me; "but, alas! that hope is vain. The "fatal secret is this: I am already mar-"ried; my heedless and unwary youth "was ensnared to give my hand to a "creature who, though I never did, "nor never will, live with as a wife, "will not, on any consideration, be "prevailed upon to resign the cursed "claim she has to me as a husband."

'Overwhelmed as I was with various 'passions, I at last assumed resolution 'enough to tell him that he had acted a 'most ungenerous and dishonourable 'part in making his addresses to me, 'knowing himself under so indissoluble 'an engagement to another. To which 'he replied, that at first he hoped to 'have got quit of his unfortunate tie; 'and that after he found all the offers 'he had made to that end were fruit-'less, the passion he had for me would 'not suffer him to restrain himself from 'seeing me, conversing with me, and 'telling me how much he adored me. 'He then made a long harangue on the 'resistless power of my charms, and the 'violence of that flame they had in-'spired him with; swore a thousand 'oaths, that the world had nothing in 'it but myself worth living for; and 'concluded with a proposal, that since 'he could not make me his wife, he 'would settle a thousand pounds a year 'upon me to be his mistress; and that it 'should be at my option either to live 'publickly with him as such, or to 'continue with my mamma, and re-'ceive his visits in a private manner.

'This offer I rejected with more dis-'dain than I had shewn to any of the 'like nature which had ever been made 'to me since my first being in the way 'of temptation; nor will you wonder 'that I did so. To be courted for 'a mistress by the very man who had so 'lately flattered me with the hopes of 'marriage, made me now look upon 'that as an affront, which, before my 'expectations had been raised to the 'height they had been, I might perhaps 'have taken as a proof of his affection. 'I ranted, stormed, concealed no part 'of the spite I was possessed of: but all 'I said seemed to make no great im-

'preſſion on him; he bore it with a temper which I thought not at all conſiſtent with the violence of the paſſion he had pretended; and, on his going away, calmly told me, that he would make the ſame propoſal he had done to me to no other woman in the world; that it was no inconſiderable one; and that, as he could do no more, he hoped my cooler moments would repreſent it as a thing worthy my attention.

'Indeed, my dear Belinda, I was half mad; and believe I gave myſelf ſome airs not any way becoming in me to a man of his quality. I met him in the Park this morning; but though he was alone, and I had only Flavia with me, he never offered to join us, but paſſed by with a ſlight bow. I ſuppoſe he reſents my behaviour; but it is no matter, ſince he is married. Vanucius is now my laſt reſource. If I could perſuade the man to purchaſe a title, he would be full as agreeable to me as Dorantes; but he is an unambitious creature, and I almoſt deſpair of it: I ſhall try, at leaſt, how far the love he has for me will prevail. My next will bring you news of what ſucceſs my endeavours will meet; till when I am, even in the midſt of my perplexity, &c.

'SELIMA.'

LETTER V.

'DEAR BELINDA,

'IT is almoſt a ſin to diſturb the felicity you enjoy with any melancholy accounts: but freſh calamities will always occaſion freſh complaints; and while I am giving you a detail of my misfortunes, methinks I am eaſed of ſome part of the weight of them. You may ſay, indeed, that this is a ſelfiſh conſideration, and I cannot deny the accuſation; but have this to anſwer in my defence—"However diſagreeable the purport of my letters are, they ſhew, at leaſt, the perfect confidence I have in your friendſhip and good-nature."

'I am apt to think that, before I tell you, you will ſuſpect I am alſo deſerted by Vanucius; and though I cannot be poſitive that ſuch a conjecture would be entirely groundleſs, yet I have little reaſon to flatter myſelf with the contrary. I have neither ſeen nor heard from him for five whole days; and this morning he ſet out for Tunbridge, without taking any other leave of me, than ſending a ſlight excuſe for not waiting on me before he went. But this is not all: a relation of his, who I know has always looked upon his courtſhip to me with an evil eye, and had, not long ago, ſo great a quarrel with him on the occaſion, that he was forbid his houſe, is now ſo far reinſtated in his good graces, as to be gone with him into the country; and I do not doubt but will take this opportunity of filling his ears with a thouſand ſtories to my diſadvantage, as he has ever done ſince my firſt acquaintance with him.

'Thus, my dear Belinda, from having, as I thought, my choice of two of the beſt matches in town, I am likely to loſe all hopes of both, and alſo to fall into the contempt and ridicule of thoſe flirts who ſo lately envied my good fortune. This laſt circumſtance is above all ſo truly mortifying, that after it I know not whether I ſhall ever be able to ſhew my face in any publick aſſembly, but rather take the ſame pains to conceal myſelf, as I once did to be conſpicuous. But farewel. The more I reflect on theſe accidents, the leſs I am capable of reſtraining my paſſion enough to aſſure you, with how much ſincerity, &c.

'SELIMA.'

LETTER VI.

'DEAR BELINDA,

'I Expected no leſs, from your known goodneſs, than the conſolatory ideas you endeavour to inſpire me with. You would fain perſuade me that I have no reaſon for deſpair; and that the ſame beauty which attracted the hearts of Dorantes and Vanucius, will alſo gain others of equal eſtimation; but, alas! I have too much experience of myſelf, and of what the world thinks of me, to entertain ſo flattering a hope. You know very well, my dear, that on my firſt ſetting up for conqueſt, I ſhewed myſelf in all publick places, and expoſed to the view of all who ſaw me, almoſt every

'charm

'charm nature has beſtowed upon me; 'yet never was addreſſed, on the ſcore 'of marriage, by any but thoſe two 'whom I have now loſt. Beſides, I 'am now what they call blown upon: 'that admiration which my firſt appear-'ance excited, wears off by my being 'ſo often ſeen; and I begin to be con-'vinced, that it was more owing to the 'peculiarity of my dreſs, and manner 'of behaviour, than to any real perfec-'tions of my perſon, that I was ſo much 'followed by a gaping multitude.

'You ſee how I am humbled; and, 'by what I have ſaid, may perhaps 'imagine that I have ſo far done with 'the pride and vanities of the world, as 'to take up with a little mercer or wool-'len-draper, if ſuch a one ſhould offer. 'But do not harbour ſo deſpicable an 'opinion of your friend: no, I will never 'ſit behind a compter, or be the wife of 'one that does. But I need not make 'this declaration; as matters ſtand, I 'am not likely to be the wife of any 'body: but ſtill, with an inviolable 'reſpect, &c.

'SELIMA.'

LETTER VII.

'DEAREST BELINDA,

'NOW may all the gods of love and 'wit inſpire my pen, to deſcribe 'to you, as it deſerves, the bleſſed re-'verſe in my condition ſince the laſt 'melancholy epiſtle you received from 'me. I was then plunged in the loweſt 'pit of deſpair, and am now raiſed to 'the higheſt ſummit of human feli-'city. In a word, I am the contracted 'ſpouſe of Dorantes; and, as ſoon as 'the preparations for our wedding can 'be got ready, I ſhall be the declared '***** of *****. Methinks I ſee 'the ſurprize I put you in. You will 'doubtleſs cry out—"How can this be, "when Dorantes has already confeſſed "himſelf the huſband of another?" 'It ſeems, indeed, a paradox; yet ſtands 'in no need of ſchool-learning to be 'explained, as you will preſently diſco-'ver.

'After the loſs of both my lovers, as 'I then imagined, I ſcarce did any 'thing but lie upon the bed and weep 'for two whole days together. My 'father, inſtead of ſaying any thing to 'conſole my afflictions, added to them 'by his reproaches, He told me that 'he knew what it would come to; that 'dreſſing myſelf up like a Bartholo-'mew baby would never get me a huſ-'band; and ſuch like ſtuff, as you know 'his low way of expreſſing himſelf: 'but, thank Heaven! the tables are 'now turned upon him; and if re-'ſpect for my mamma did not reſtrain 'me, I ſhould return his flouts with in-'tereſt.'

'One afternoon, as I was ſitting at 'the window, with the ſaſh up, muſing 'on my unhappy fate, I ſaw Dorantes's 'chariot at the door. While his foot-'man knocked, he looked out, and 'made me a very reſpectful bow. I 'was amazed; but thought it would be 'too groſs an affront to a man of his 'quality to be denied to him, as he ſaw 'I was at home; nor had I time for 'ſuch a thing, if I would have done it; 'for the maid, who opened the door, 'ſhewed him directly up ſtairs. On 'his entrance, I aſſumed one of thoſe 'haughty airs, which vulgar, low-bred 'people, are apt to call impudent and 'ſaucy; and, with my head half turned 'another way, ſaid to him—"I am ſur-"prized to ſee you here, Dorantes, af-"ter the converſation you entertained "me with at your laſt viſit."

"Oh, Selima," replied he, "I came "not now to repeat the audacity I was "then guilty of, nor to offend your "ears with any future diſcourſes of the "like nature, but to beg pardon for the "paſt; and hope that what I have to of-"fer will make ſome atonement."—"I "do not comprehend your meaning," 'returned I; "but, whatever it may "be, cannot think it becomes me to "continue any correſpondence with a "married man, who has pretended to "make his addreſſes to me."—"I am "not married," rejoined he eagerly; "and the trial I made of your virtue, "adds a double luſtre to the beauty "that firſt inflamed me, and I am "now much more your ſlave than "ever."—"Not married!" cried I; "why then did you tell me ſo?"—"Pardon the innocent impoſition I "practiſed on you," ſaid he, kiſſing 'my hand: "I was willing to ſee in "what manner you would reſent it; "your behaviour has anſwered to my "wiſh, and I now offer you a hand

"which

" which I never had one thought or " wish to dispose of to any other wo- " man."

' Oh, Belinda, how did my heart ' flutter at these words! As Semandra ' says in the play—

" I took them all, and died upon the sound:
" To the driv'n air my flying soul was " fasten'd.
" Each charming syllable he spoke was " mine."

' The many passionate and endearing ' things he said to me would not come ' within the compass of twenty letters: ' you must therefore, till I have a better ' opportunity of relating the particu- ' lars, content yourself with a brief ' summary of the whole, which is this; ' that he is entirely at liberty to marry ' me, and he is resolved to do so; that ' an agreement the same night was made ' between us for that purpose; and that ' mamma and her good friend, who ' luckily happened to be with her, were ' called in to be witnesses of it.

' Since every thing has been settled ' thus happily for me, some people have ' been impertinent enough to assure me, ' that to their own knowledge Dorantes ' was married several years ago, and ' that his wife is still alive; but this ' gives me no manner of concern. If ' there be any woman who has a claim ' of this nature on him, he has doubt- ' less found means to prevail on her ' to relinquish it; so I look upon it as ' none of my affair. He marries me in ' the face of the world; has promised to ' present me at court; and while I en- ' joy the title of ******* of ******, ' and the grandeur annexed to it, shall ' not trouble myself with any whispers ' that may go about the town in relation ' to the lawfulness or unlawfulness of ' my marriage.

' It is no inconsiderable addition to ' my contentment, to hear that you de- ' sign to return to town in a short time. ' I long to see you, and to give you an ' airing in my own coach and six, with ' three flaunting footmen on the back of ' it: we shall cut a better figure, Belinda, ' than when we made our little excur- ' sions together in a mean, dirty hack. ' O, Fortune! Fortune! dear, propi- ' tious Fortune, how am I bound to ' praise thee! But no more at present, ' than that I am, with the greatest good ' wishes, &c.

' SELIMA.

' P. S. I need not desire you to tell ' Philander what has happened; I ' know you will, and also that his ' regard for you will make him ' participate in the happiness of ' your friend. Once more, adieu.'

Here end the letters of this celebrated lady, who in a very little time after married Dorantes.

CHAP. VI.

CONSISTS CHIEFLY OF SOME REFLECTIONS OF THE AUTHOR'S OWN ON FALSE TASTE, THE MISTAKEN ROAD IN THE PURSUIT OF FAME, AND THE FOLLY OF AN ILL-DIRECTED EMULATION. TO WHICH ARE ADDED, A FEW FAINT SKETCHES TAKEN FROM THE MOST AMIABLE ORIGINALS IN MODERN LIFE.

THE celebrated Dr. Buffy tells us, than when we say a man has a fine or true taste, no more is meant by those words, than that he has a sound judgment, a clear head, and a nicely distinguishing capacity in judging of what is really worthy and becoming, and what is not so; whether it be in the choice of his amusements, his equipage, his apparel, the furniture of his house, the covering of his table, or whatever else depends on the direction of the will and fancy. Now, as every thing is best shewn by it's opposite, if the definition given us by the French author of the true taste be just, as I believe most people will allow it is, to think and act contrary to what he describes, is what we call false taste: but, in my opinion, to think and do always what is wrong, and at the same time imagine that all we think and do is right, is not of itself sufficient to take in the meaning of the phrase in it's full extent; there must always be added an affectation of being singular, over curious, over delicate, over elegant, somewhat above the common level of mankind; in fine, the man of a false taste must not be a fool of Heaven's making,

making, but his own. The late witty Earl of Rochester has presented us with a very picturesque character of the man of false taste, in the following lines—

'He was a fool through choice, not want
'of wit;
'His foppery, without the help of sense,
'Could ne'er have risen to such an excel-
'lence.
'Nature's as lame in making a true fop
'As a philosopher: the very top
'And dignity of folly, we attain
'By studious search, and labour of the
'brain;
'By observation, counsel, and deep thought.
'God never made a coxcomb worth a groat:
'We owe that name to industry and arts;
'An eminent fool must be a man of parts.'

A person may be endowed with great talents, yet, through a false taste in the manner of displaying them, be rendered ridiculous instead of respectable; and, while he aims at attracting universal admiration, become the object of universal contempt. Hippias is profoundly learned, is well skilled in the most useful sciences, and endowed, both by nature and education, with every requisite to render him a worthy member of society; yet, by some unaccountable oddities of manners and behaviour, he makes himself hated where he might be loved, despised where he might be respected, and a mere cypher in a world where he might be a figure of the greatest consequence. He is not at all dissatisfied that every one knows and speaks of him as a man possessed of a very opulent fortune, yet affects to look down with scorn on all the pleasures, and even innocent amusements, it might afford him; and to such an excess does he carry this humour, that whatever is beyond the necessities of nature he treats as luxury and epicurisms; vainly imagining that the wearing of a threadbare coat, and a wig that the head it covers scarce remembers ever to have had a curl, entitles him to the character of a philosopher.

But this ostentatious humility, as I think it may be justly called, is not the most unpardonable error into which Hippias is led by his false taste: this serves only to make him ridiculous, but there is another which makes him hateful. The ambition he has of being reverenced as a Stoick, renders him deaf to the dictates of humanity, and wholly insensible of all social feeling for his fellow-creatures. He partakes not in the joys or griefs of even those he calls his friends; nor would lift a finger, move a step, or speak a syllable, either to promote the one, or dissipate the other. The most distressful circumstance has not the power to touch his heart; and if any one knows him little enough to employ his assistance or advice in the extremest exigence, he replies, with a solemn and magisterial air, that he can say nothing to their complaints; that pity is a passion; and that, by the force of his reason, he has divested himself of all passions, of what kind soever. Thus does Hippias, by indulging one unhappy propensity, forfeit all the love and esteem the qualities he is possessed of would otherwise attract. The manner in which he is now looked upon gives me room to suspect that, whenever he makes his exit from this world, he will have an epitaph somewhat like what I read on a tomb-stone in a country church-yard—

'Here ******, stretch'd at his full length,
'is laid;
'Whom, living, no one lov'd, nor mourn'd
'when dead.'

Numberless are the instances might be given to prove the best capacities may be, and frequently are, perverted by false taste and misapplication. As one of our most eminent authors tells us, the love of fame is the universal passion; it is imprinted, in a more or less degree, on every human heart. Those who have great talents, are apt to think they can never render themselves sufficiently conspicuous; and those of weaker intellects, yet possessed of the same vanity, are sometimes so infatuated, as, rather than not to make a noise in the world, to do things which may incur a lampoon, since they cannot deserve a panegyrick. A private life, or, as they term it, a life of obscurity, is to some people the severest misfortune they can labour under: they will tell you, that they may as well be out of the world, as of no consequence in it; and few there are who will take the poet's word for a contrary passion—

'Th' unknown, untalk'd of man, is only
'blest;
'No anxious doubts his peaceful breast an-
'noy,
'From praise and censure equally remote;
'Nor

'Nor hope, nor fear, his happineſs de-
'ſtroys,
'But ſafe within himſelf, himſelf enjoys.'

There are alſo people who, having no peculiarities of their own, affect to imitate thoſe they may ſee in others; eſpecially if the perſon they copy after be of a ſuperior rank, or has the reputation of a wit. Theſe may properly enough be called ſecond-hand fools; for they generally take up the follies juſt when they are left off by the perſons they would be thought exactly to reſemble: according to a vulgar adage—'The fool will ſometimes peep out of 'the wiſeſt man.' The leaſt failing in a perſon of diſtinguiſhed character is preſently adopted by his inferiors, till it becomes a faſhion. Emulation, however, when well-directed, is one of the moſt noble propenſities of the mind; nothing can be more truly laudable than an endeavour to ſquare our actions by a praiſe-worthy model: but I am ſorry to ſay, that this is not ſo often the caſe as every good man would wiſh it were.

There are ſome people ſo unhappy, as to take for a pattern all the bad they can find, and neglect all the good; and this, too, without deſign, or any untoward inclination, but through mere careleſſneſs: and, provided they do ſomething ſuch a one or ſuch a one does, give not themſelves the trouble to examine whether what they imitate be a beauty or a blemiſh; or, indeed, whether it be either, or only a matter of indifference, and altogether unworthy of regard. And, now I am upon this head, I cannot forbear relating an example of the ſort I laſt mentioned; which, though it happened ſome years ago, and is extremely trifling in itſelf, may ſerve to ſhew how little care people ſometimes take in their choice of an object for imitation.

A young gentleman of my acquaintance, who paſſed in the world for a very pretty fellow, either was, or affected to be, becauſe it was the mode, a prodigious admirer of the late deſervedly famous Sir Iſaac Newton. He had the honour of being known to that truly great man, frequently viſited him, and had the opportunity of hearing many things from him, which doubtleſs were well worthy of being treaſured in his memory; yet I could never find he took particular notice of any thing but this I am now going to repeat. Sir Iſaac had him at his table one day, and happened caſually to ſay, that he thought nothing ſweeter than a bacon bone. My friend immediately catched up the word, and from that moment made it his own, and on all occaſions quoted it. If any one aſked him to eat with them, he would reply—'Yes, if you have any bacon; 'for, as Sir Iſaac Newton ſays, there is 'nothing ſweeter than a bacon bone.' In fine, he went to no place, mingled in no converſation, without finding ſome means to introduce the ſweetneſs of the bacon bone; and repeated the above-mentioned expreſſion ſo often, and ſo impertinently, that at laſt he became the jeſt of all his companions, who, in deriſion, called him by no other name than the Bacon Bone. Ridiculous as this may appear, I can aſſure my reader, that the gentleman I have been ſpeaking of does not ſtand alone, but has many parallels in my catalogue of obſervations on a miſguided imitation, as I could eaſily prove; but my humour has on a ſudden changed it's vein, and I begin to grow too ſerious to recite any farther inſtances of ſo ludicrous a nature. Degenerate as we mortals are ſaid to be, yet even now there are not wanting ſome few illuſtrious examples of both, whom even an endeavour to copy after would be ſome merit in the attempter.

See where the noble Altamont ſtands forth a ſhining pattern of exalted virtue! Dignity in his countenance; benevolence in his hand; the ſtricteſt juſtice, honour, and ſocial kindneſs, in his heart. Near him you will always find the chaſte and fair Euphemia, his illuſtrious conſort; a numerous and beauteous offſpring with joyous ſmiles play round their feet; Juno and Hymen hover over their heads, and ſhower continual bleſſings on the happy pair. From Altamont and Euphemia, ye huſbands, fathers, learn the duties due to thoſe endearing names, and ceaſe to imagine that to ſwerve from them is politeneſs.

Learn you who languiſh in a widowed bed, from Eliſmonda learn to ſupport the melancholy of your condition as becomes you—Eliſmonda, who though, as Lee expreſſes it, in all the full-grown pride of glorious beauty, diſdains all overtures for a ſecond marriage, ſhuns pomp and ceremony, nor haunts the court nor publick walks; but in her cloſet ruminates what good is in her

power

power to do; who moſt deſerves, and who ſtands moſt in need of her relief; and all thoſe cares ſhe once employed to pleaſe the beſt of huſbands, are now taken up with acts of piety and ſoft compaſſion.

Learn, ye fair ramblers after ſhew and hurry, ye midnight gadders to maſquerades and balls, from lovely Amadea learn the timid modeſty that beſt befits and beſt ſecures the honour of a virgin ſtate. She takes no pains to attract the eyes of the gaping multitude, and rather ſhuns than covets popular admiration. She avoids being the firſt in any new faſhion, and never runs into the extremes of it; goes to no routes, aſſemblies, or maſquerades; ſeldom indulges herſelf even with a play or opera; and, when ſhe does, is always accompanied by ſome grave relation, whoſe preſence is a check on the impertinence of thoſe whiffers who ſkip from box to box, ſaying the ſame thing to every fine woman they ſee there. When ſhe walks in the Park, ſhe makes choice of thoſe hours when the leaſt company are there; and the only publick place you are ſure to find her in, is at church.

The example of Dorilaus is a noble reprimand to thoſe who ſuffer themſelves to grow old in riots and debaucheries. Early he quitted the levities of youth; and as the ſilver ſwan, emerging from the ſtream, ſhakes off the drops that hang upon it's wings, ſo Dorilaus but dipped into the follies of the times, juſt taſted the licentious pleaſures of the town, then deſpiſed and threw them from him with abhorrence. Temptations of every kind have ſince ſurrounded him, yet has he ſtill remained unmoved; equally inflexible to the inſinuations of luxury, and to the bribes of corruption. Steady in virtuous principles, the evil ones at length grew weary of their fruitleſs labour, and now ſuffer him to enjoy a calm and undiſturbed repoſe, in the ſociety of a few ſelect friends, who join with him in commiſerating the infatuation of others.

If there were no cards nor dice in the world, Favonius would be looked upon as an almoſt faultleſs being, and the voice of envy have nothing wherewith to caſt a blemiſh on his name. It cannot be denied, however, that Favonius has wit, honour, generoſity, affability, and an unaffected ſweetneſs of diſpoſition: qualifications which would greatly compenſate for his love of gaming, if it were not for two conſiderations, which are theſe. Firſt, That by indulging this unhappy propenſity, he laviſhes too much of that time which might be employed in the defence of the liberties of his country, and for the benefit of the commonwealth. Secondly, That his high character in the world makes many people ready, and even proud, to follow his example in this the ſole error of which he can be accuſed, while they neglect the leaſt endeavour to imitate any one of the numerous virtues he is maſter of.

There are many others of both ſexes ſtill living, whoſe characters would reflect honour on the imitators; and ſome who, though the world has been ſo unfortunate as to loſe, have left behind them ſuch monuments of their virtues as never can be forgotten; their memory ſtrikes a damp on guilt, and will be eternally venerated by all the wiſe and good. But this is a theme which, though perhaps little affecting to the greateſt part of my readers, may yet be too melancholy to ſome others, as well as to myſelf; I ſhall therefore dwell no longer upon it, but return to a ſubject more ſuitable to the preſent diſpoſition of the times, which I am not ſo ignorant as not to know an author ought always to conſult, if he regards either his own reputation, or the intereſt of his bookſeller.

CHAP. VII.

GIVES A SUCCINCT RELATION OF TWO PRETTY EXTRAORDINARY ADVENTURES THAT PRESENTED THEMSELVES TO THE AUTHOR IN A MORNING RAMBLE.

A Clear and undiſturbed ſky, illuminated with a ſmiling ſun, and perfumed with a thouſand odours from the new-budding ſpring, invited me to Hyde Park. I girded my inviſible Belt about me, for the reaſons I have already mentioned in a preceding chapter; and alſo put my Tablets in my pocket, though I had not the leaſt expectation of meeting with any thing in that place which ſhould give me occaſion to make uſe of them. The ſweet ſolemnity of this ſolitude afforded me infinitely more pleaſure than ever I had found in a crouded Mall: it inſpired me with the

moſt delightful ideas; which indulging, I wandered for I believe near two hours, without meeting with any one object to interrupt my contemplations. How much longer I might have continued in in this agreeable reverie, I know not; for I was rouzed from it by the ſudden appearance of a gentleman at ſome diſtance from me, but who was advancing directly towards the path where I was. On his approach, I ſtepped a little on one ſide, to prevent his running againſt me. He walked backwards and forwards with ſome emotion, looked often on his watch, and diſcovered many ſigns of the utmoſt impatience. By the cockade in his hat, I doubted not of his being a military gentleman, and imagined that ſome diſpute of honour was that morning to be decided by the ſword; but I was ſoon convinced of my miſtake, the officer having more of Cupid than of Mars in his head.

I had not been many minutes, before a coach came up, and ſtopped very near the place where I ſtood. There were three women in it; one of whom, and much the richeſt dreſſed, I preſently knew to be the celebrated Lipathea: the others, as I afterwards found, were her woman and nurſe; this, it ſeems, being the firſt time of her coming abroad ſince her bringing into the world a ſon and heir, to the great joy of that honourable family, as the news writers expreſs it. On ſight of the coach, the young officer advanced briſkly towards it. Lipathea ſaw him at the ſame time; and, thruſting out her head, and half her body, with her accuſtomed loud laugh, called to him to come in. With theſe words, the door was immediately opened; the two women came out, and the officer jumped in: after which, the coachman was ordered to drive, as ſlow as he could, to the Walnut-tree Walk, and ſo round to the Ha-ha Wall, and back to the ſame place again.

I had no opportunity to follow them, ſo was obliged to content myſelf with hearing the diſcourſe that paſſed between the two women who were left behind. To this end I kept as cloſe to them as I could, with my Tablets in my hand; but the ſubjects they talked on were ſo trifling, that I did not think it worth while to ſpread them for the impreſſion of their words, till all at once the nurſe began to run into a long detail of the particulars ſhe knew, or could remember, that had happened in the ſeveral families where ſhe had been; but the matters ſhe related being wholly inſignificant, and unworthy of record, I ſhut up my Tablets, and gave no farther ear to what ſhe ſaid. I quitted not the place, however, till the lovers returned from the tour they had been making. The coach ſtopped, and the captain was ſet down near the end of the ſame path where he had been taken up; and Lipathea beckoned her two attendants to come in, who by this time, I found, were heartily weary of their promenade.

The well-known character of Lipathea, one would think, ſhould have hindered me from being much ſurprized at any thing ſhe did; yet could I not be an eye-witneſs of the glaring affront ſhe now put upon her huſband, and the modeſty of her ſex, without being ſeized with a conſternation impoſſible to be expreſſed. My meditations on this adventure had perhaps laſted till I came home, if they had not been interrupted by another which fell in my way, and afforded me, in it's conſequences, more matter for diverſion than the former. Beauty, or what is more than beauty, the power of attraction, is not confined to perſons of a high ſtation: Nature can exert herſelf as much in the cottage as the palace; and we ſometimes find more real graces under a plain, homely coif, than under a fine gauze cap ornamented with jewels; as the little incident I am about to rehearſe will abundantly evince.

As I was paſſing through St. James's Park, I met a young woman with a porringer in her hand, neatly covered with a large earthen ſaucer. She advanced with ſlow and cautious ſteps, leſt ſhe ſhould ſpill any part of what ſhe had brought. When ſhe drew near the Parade, a tall grenadier, who I found was her huſband, ſtepped forth from among his comrades, and received the meſs from her, as alſo a pewter ſpoon, which ſhe took out of her pocket, and gave to him at the ſame time. Though every thing about her was clean, yet the reader may eaſily ſuppoſe extremely mean: ſhe had a face, however, that ſtood in need of no advantages from dreſs to ſet it off. Never had I ſeen a finer pair of eyes, or a more ſoft and delicate complexion; and, to crown all the reſt of her perfections, there appeared, not only in her countenance, but in every little motion and geſture, that which, in my opinion, is

the

the very ſoul of lovelineſs—a moſt perfect innocence and ſimplicity. I was not, however, the only admirer whom her charms had that morning attracted; a certain officer of diſtinction, walking on the Parade with another gentleman, having ſeen her at ſome diſtance, quitted his companion, and came to the grenadier, accoſting him in theſe terms—

Officer. So, grenadier, you are taking your morning's refreſhment. Is this pretty damſel your wife?

Grenadier. Yes, pleaſe your honour.

Officer. She ſeems very young: you can't have been married long.

Grenadier. About three months, pleaſe your honour.

Officer. I hope you uſe her well; I dare ſay ſhe deſerves it.

Grenadier. I think ſhe has no reaſon to complain, Sir.—Have you, Peggy?

Wife. No, indeed.

Officer. I am glad of it. I would always have the women uſed well.

He ſaid no more, but turned upon his heel, and walked away with a careleſs air, as if nothing farther than what he had made ſhew of was in his head; but I perceived he removed no farther than the end of the Canal, and kept an obſervant eye on thoſe he had left behind. The grenadier having finiſhed his little repaſt, mingled with ſome ſoldiers who were on the Parade, and his wife tripped out of the Park with much more haſte than ſhe had come into it. The officer, who had never loſt ſight of her, followed, though for a while at ſome diſtance; and I kept very near him, reſolving to ſee what it was he aimed at, and what would be the iſſue of his deſigns, in caſe he had any of the nature I ſuſpected. She went through the Treaſury; and when he ſaw ſhe had entered there, he mended his pace; and coming up with her under the arched paſſage, gave her a little ſlap on the ſhoulder: ſhe ſtarted, and turned back; but, on ſeeing him, dropped a low curtſey, while he ſpoke thus—

Officer. Well overtaken, pretty laſs. I wanted to ſpeak with you: I fancy I have ſeen you ſomewhere or other. Pray what country woman are you?

Wife. I was born in Lancaſhire, ſo pleaſe your honour.

Officer. I thought ſo; for I have heard ſay all the Lancaſhire girls are very handſome. And pray what brought you to London?

Wife. The hopes of getting into a good ſervice, pleaſe your honour; but not hearing of one preſently, and happening to get acquainted with my huſband in the mean time, I changed my condition.

Officer. You did well: there is nothing like being your own miſtreſs. But you country folks are generally afraid of a red coat: how came you to venture on a ſoldier?

Wife. I don't know, Sir: it was my fate, I think.

Officer. Well, here is ſomething to encourage you to love the army.

With theſe words he drew a ſix-and-thirty piece of gold out of his pocket, and made an offer of putting it into her hand; but ſhe drew back, either aſhamed or unwilling to accept it, and cried—'Oh, Sir, I have heard ſay that women ſhould never take money from the 'men!' To which he replied—'That 'is from your mean, dirty fellows; but 'it is ill-manners to refuſe any thing 'given you by your ſuperiors.' He now took hold of her hand; and a ſecond effort obliging her to receive his preſent, ſhe looked on it, turned it two or three times, and then ſaid—'Bleſs 'me! what muſt I do with this great 'piece of money?'

Officer. Oh, you will find a uſe for it; that pretty face of yours requires a thouſand things that the grenadier's pay will not enable him to purchaſe for you. And, now I think on it, 'tis pity he ſhould continue in that low ſtation: I have it in my power to raiſe him, and I will do it; he ſhall have a halbert forthwith. But I muſt talk to you a little firſt on that ſcore. Where do you live? I will come and ſee you.

Wife. Oh, dear Sir, we have not a place fit for your honour to come into.

Officer. No matter for that. I am not proud; and never ſcruple to go to any place, how mean ſoever it be, where I can either do a pleaſure to myſelf, or a ſervice to my friends; therefore no excuſes.

Wife. Your honour is very good. But I do not know how to tell you, for there is no ſign near us. We lodge up one pair of ſtairs, at a button-maker's, the next door but one to a chandler's ſhop, in a little alley that turns out of King Street by a green ſtall, and is no thoroughfare.

Officer. I shall never find it by this direction; you shall shew me where it is now.

Wife. Lord, Sir, what will the people in the street say, to see me go cheek-by-jole with such a fine gentleman as your honour?

Officer. Well, then, you shall walk before, and I will follow you.

Wife. But, Sir, my room is all dirty; I was just going home to clean it, now I have carried my husband his breakfast.

Officer. I shall not go in, nor visit you, till after dark; to hinder, as you say, the neighbours from staring at me. I will come this evening, about nine or ten o'clock. Your husband is to be upon duty, but do you take care not to be out of the way; for it is absolutely necessary I should have some discourse with you before I do any thing for him.

Wife. Lord, Sir, what business can your honour have with me that he must not know!

Officer. You may tell him afterwards, if you will. But I won't detain you any longer; go home and please yourself that your husband shall be a serjeant to-morrow, and that I shall raise him still higher, so that he may come to be a captain at last.

Wife. A captain!—Oh la! I should never have thought of such a thing!

Officer. It all depends upon yourself, and what I have to communicate to you; so be sure be at home, and alone when I come.

Wife. Yes, please your honour. I would not, for all the world, be so rude as to disappoint you; though I am ashamed you should come into such a poor habitation as mine.

Officer. Never mind that, my pretty one; I shall look on nothing in the place but yourself.

While he was speaking this, he cast his eyes about, and finding there was nobody in sight, gave her a kiss; after which she made a low curtsey, and turned away to go home, blushing all the way she went like the sun through a gentle shower in an April morning. He followed, as he said he would, till he had seen her enter into her little dwelling; nor left the place, till he had taken sufficient notice of every thing, to be able to remember and know it again. I was now under a most sensible concern for this poor young creature, thus likely to be betrayed; not by any inclination to ill, but merely through the fear of offending a person above her: quite ignorant of the snares of the world, and untaught how to resist temptation, she was, alas! just ready to fall into a real fault, by an endeavour to avoid an imaginary one. As Mr. Waller said, though on a different occasion—

> 'Innocence and youth oft makes,
> 'In artless virgins such mistakes.'

Though I had not the least doubt but that the young wife of the grenadier would become a prey to the vicious inclination of her seducer, yet I had the curiosity to see in what manner she would behave on the full discovery of his designs upon her. Accordingly, I went about nine o'clock to the little alley, and posted myself on a bench at a door just opposite to the dwelling of the grenadier, resolving to go in with the officer when he should come. I had not waited above half an hour before he appeared: he was muffled up in his cloak; but, by the help of a small winking light from an adjacent shop, I easily knew him. He had taken too much notice of the house to be mistaken in it, and entered directly, the door being left open, as I suppose, for that purpose. I followed close behind him; but never had my Invisibility's been in so much danger as it was now brought into by this adventure.

The grenadier, it seems, having been informed by his wife of every thing that had passed between her and the officer, and more zealous in the defence of his honour than perhaps some in a much higher station would have been, had prevailed, for some pots of beer, on a brother grenadier to do duty for him that night, so returned home before the hour appointed for his rival's approach; and having armed himself with a good oaken cudgel, stood on the middle of the stairs, ready to give a proper reception to that invader of his rights. My leader had not advanced above five or six steps of the stairs, when he received a violent blow on the head; which, together with the surprize it gave him, made him reel back, and like to fall on the poor Invisible; but I hastily and prudently withdrew to the middle of the entry, and stood aloof, to hear, at a more safe distance, what would be the end of this affair. The grenadier pursued his strokes; and the officer,

Smirke del.

Nagle, sculp.

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officer, being in no condition to defend himself in that disadvantageous posture, thought it best to make his escape; but not having been accustomed to such steep winding stairs, fell down to the bottom. His antagonist, though better acquainted with the passage, in attempting to follow him, had the same fate; but being uppermost, soon recovered himself; and catching hold of the officer by the collar as he was endeavouring to rise, forced him on his knees, and continued buffeting him on the head and face till he was covered all over with the blood that gushed from his nose and mouth, as I afterwards perceived.

The officer made several efforts to draw his sword, and at length did so; but the other finding what he was about, immediately seized it by the hilt, wrested it from him, snapped it asunder with his foot, and threw it over his head. 'Rascal, will you murder me!' cried the officer. 'No,' replied the grenadier; 'I will only cool your courage, and make you remember running after other men's wives.'—'Dog! do you know who I am?' demanded he. 'I only know you for a villain,' said the other, 'that would debauch my wife, and as such I'll use you.'—'Sirrah,' returned the officer, 'I will make you pay dearly for this insolence! You know well enough that I am ******.'—'You lye!' rejoined the other, 'and deserve to be hanged for taking such a gentleman's name in your mouth! ****** would scorn to sneak into such a poor hut as this, to seduce any man's wife.' The grenadier's hands were not idle all this time: but the officer having at length got upon his feet, they continued wrestling together for some minutes, in which combat the furious husband had much the better; which put me in mind of what Mr. Rowe says in Jane Shore—

'In spite of birth and dignity, a man
'Oppos'd against a man, is but a man.'

The officer now finding himself quite disabled, and being still under the gripe of his unrelenting enemy, called vehemently out for help; on which several of the neighbours ran in with lighted candles in their hands, and the entry was presently full of men, women, and children; but never was such a spectacle as this demolished beau. 'Bless me! what is the matter?' cried one; 'what is the matter?'—'Ask no questions. Here is half a crown for any one that will get me a chair immediately,' said he; and the word was scarce out of his mouth, before a cobler ran with all the speed he could, to do as he desired. The grenadier now affected the utmost surprize, and said—'All the world should never have made me believe it was your honour! I protest I took you for a rogue that wanted to come to bed to my wife while I was abroad, and thought I could not use such a one too ill.' The women, on hearing this, guessed how the business was, and looked at one another, and grinned: one of them, however, was so charitable, as to fetch a bowl of water, to wash the blood off his face and garments. He made use off what she brought, but gave no other answer to what the grenadier had said, than a look full of resentment and confusion.

A chair being brought, he catched up his hat and wig, which had fallen off in the scuffle, went into it, leaving behind him sufficient matter to employ the conversation of the whole alley for a considerable time. On hearing afterwards the whole truth of the affair from the grenadier and his wife, every one applauded the conduct of them both, and laughed heartily at the disappointment and correction of the lascivious officer. For my own part, after I got home, the satisfaction of finding myself safe from the dangers into which my curiosity had brought me, was succeeded by some considerations on the passages I had been witness of; and I could not help being filled with the utmost astonishment, that persons endowed with a liberal education, and from whom much better things might be expected, should, for the sake of gratifying a foolish inclination, the fleeting pleasure of a moment, not only be guilty of the greatest injustice to others, but also of the most abject demeaning of themselves.

CHAP. VIII.

IS CALCULATED RATHER FOR ADMONITION THAN ENTERTAINMENT, AND THEREFORE LIKELY TO BE BUT LITTLE RELISHED.

HOW vainly do we boast the light of reason, when we refuse to submit either our wills or actions to the guidance

guidance of it's direction; when, through every ſtage of life, we ſuffer ſome darling paſſion to gain dominion over us, and utterly extinguiſh that glorious lamp we ſeem ſo proud of, and would be thought ſo eminently to poſſeſs above the reſt of the creation! Prodigality is generally the vice of youth, and avarice of age: but though both theſe propenſities proceed from a wrong turn of mind, and are diametrically oppoſite to ſound judgment, yet I think ſomewhat more be ſaid in excuſe of the one than of the other. The prodigal laviſhes his ſtores in ſuch things as do a pleaſure to himſelf; and if he ſquanders away his patrimony in riotous living, and becomes miſerable in the end, there are ſome who profit by his misfortunes; his money circulates, and the publick ſuffer nothing by his private ruin. The miſer, on the contrary, not only denies himſelf all enjoyment of the goods of fortune, but alſo withholds them, as much as in his power, from every one elſe: he parts with nothing he can get into his clutches; amaſſes heaps of treaſure; and ſmiles, with a wicked ſatisfaction, to ſee it lie ruſting in his coffers, while numbers of his fellow-creatures are periſhing for want of it.

Avarice, above all other paſſions, ſo takes up the ſoul, that it leaves not the leaſt room for any of the nobler ſenſations. Love, friendſhip, pity, and even natural affection, are excluded thence. The covetous man regards only the gratification of that one ſordid view; all his fears, his hopes, his cares, are centered there, and he ſeldom ſticks at any thing to obtain it. Beſides, what can be more abſurd in itſelf, than for people to labour with all their might in heaping riches which they neither uſe, nor can aſſure themſelves but that the next moment may diſpoſſeſs them of? And it is remarkable, that the nearer they approach to the time when they can expect no other than to be ſnatched for ever from the idol they had worſhipped, they grow the more eager to preſerve it. The condition of thoſe children who have the misfortune to be deſcended from parents of the humour I am ſpeaking of, can never be too much commiſerated, eſpecially if they happen to be born with notions more juſt and elevated; an inſtance of which kind I am now going to relate.

A gentleman, whom I ſhall diſtinguiſh by the name of Avario, is ſprung from a very ancient family in the weſt of England, has a large eſtate, and might have been beloved and reſpected by his neighbours, if the exceſſive parſimoniouſneſs of his diſpoſition did not make him do things which demean his rank, and even render him contemptible in the eyes both of his equals and inferiors. He was married, in his youth, to a lady of birth and fortune, but had no child for near twelve years; at the end of which time, however, ſhe brought a ſon into the world; which, one would imagine, ſhould have filled the father's heart with the higheſt ſatisfaction; but, inſtead of thanking Providence for ſending him an heir of his own bowels for his eſtate, he only repined at the additional expence the new comer muſt neceſſarily occaſion. His lady was ſenſibly afflicted at the little notice he took of the young Clyamon, for ſo the ſon of this unworthy father was called; but when ſhe reproached him with his unkindneſs, he only gave her this churliſh anſwer—That he ſaw no cauſe for any great rejoicing; for he ſuppoſed, as ſhe had now began to teem, he ſhould in a few years have more children than he ſhould be able to maintain.

Clyamon, notwithſtanding, grew a very fine boy; but would have had little to boaſt of from education, if his uncle by the mother's ſide, who was exceeding rich, and had no children, had not conceived a more than ordinary affection for him, and reſolved to beſtow on him all thoſe advantages which were denied to him by the niggard diſpoſition of his father. He told Avario, that if he would truſt him with his ſon, he would breed him as his own, and take care he ſhould want for none of thoſe accompliſhments which conſtitute the truly fine gentleman, in caſe he were capable of receiving them; 'Which,' added he, 'I do not at all doubt of, from 'the early promiſe of his childhood.' This offer was too agreeable to both the parents not to be readily accepted: the father rejoiced at being eaſed of an expence he could not foreſee without regret: and the mother was highly pleaſed to think that her little darling would now receive a more polite education than ſhe could hope the too great frugality of her huſband would have allowed him.

Clyamon was about ten years of age when Sir Arthur Frankwill, for ſo this worthy

worthy uncle was called, took him under his protection, and carried him to a fine ſeat he had about twelve miles diſtant from Avario's. Doubly happy for him was now this change in his ſituation; for his mother dying ſoon after his removal, he would doubtleſs have been deprived of many indulgences he had hitherto enjoyed at home, but which were abundantly made up to him by the tender affection he was treated with by the good baronet. Sir Arthur, not approving of any of the ſchools in that part of the country, ſent him to Eton, under the conduct of a faithful old ſervant; and in that place it was he received his firſt rudiments of learning. The improvements he made there were ſuch as did honour to the maſters, as well as to his own capacity. The accounts thoſe gentlemen gave of him, in their letters to Sir Arthur, were confirmed by their pupil's behaviour whenever the times of breaking up gave him the liberty of going into the country. Both uncle and father were ſurprized on finding the ſwift progreſs he made in his learning; the one was charmed with the ſucceſs of his endeavours, and the other quite tranſported that his ſon was in a fair way of being poſſeſſed of ſo many accompliſhments without any coſt to himſelf.

Having perfected himſelf in all he could be taught at Eton, he quitted the ſchool, by his uncle's permiſſion, and returned to the weſt; where, after having ſtaid ſome time to make an acquaintance with the gentry, and take ſuch diverſions as the country afforded, his uncle thought proper he ſhould finiſh his ſtudies at one of the univerſities, and, for ſome reaſons which he had within himſelf, made choice of Oxford. Clyamon accordingly went thither at the age of eighteen, and had the good fortune to have for his tutor a gentleman of deep learning, a keen diſcernment, and an unprejudiced judgment; who inſpired him with ſuch principles of juſtice and true honour as I believe he will never depart from. The admonitions of this worthy tutor, joined to a natural love of virtue in himſelf, entirely preſerved him from running into any of thoſe exceſſes too many of his age are guilty of: though nothing could be more gay and ſpirituous, yet every thing he ſaid or did was governed by a certain decorum, without ſeeming to be ſo. He could be chearful among the men of his acquaintance, without immorality or prophaneneſs; courtly among the ladies, without flattery or inſincerity; reſpectful to his ſuperiors, and maintain a proper diſtance to thoſe below him without pride or ill-nature. In fine, his character and manners were ſuch as made him highly eſteemed by all the wiſe and good, and beloved even by thoſe who would not be at the pains to imitate him.

After a ſtay of about three years at the univerſity, he returned to Sir Arthur's; for that kind uncle and patron would needs have him continue to look upon his houſe as his chief home: nor did Avario at all oppoſe this motion, though he was now extremely proud of his ſon, went often to ſee him, and would always make him be preſent at every publick aſſembly or meeting in which he was himſelf a party. It is certain, indeed, never any young gentleman was more happy or contented in his mind than Clyamon at the time I am ſpeaking of; he had but one wiſh beyond what he already poſſeſſed, and that remained no longer ungratified than while he forbore to mention it. He was as well acquainted, as books could make him, with moſt foreign parts, eſpecially with thoſe kingdoms and ſtates which compoſe this quarter of the globe; but when he conſidered that the beſt deſcription cannot but fall infinitely ſhort of the proſpect, he was very deſirous of being an eye-witneſs of thoſe things and places he had read of.

Sir Arthur highly approved of his nephew's inclination to travel; it ſeemed laudable to him, as he had himſelf often thought it was the only thing wanting to compleat his other accompliſhments: and one day, as they were talking on that ſubject—'My dear Clyamon,' ſaid he, 'the deſire you have of ſeeing the 'world is truly praiſe-worthy, and I 'think you cannot better employ two 'or three of thoſe years which I hope 'Heaven has allotted for you, than in 'viſiting the ſeveral courts of Europe: 'it will enlarge your ideas; and the 'difference of their manners and poli-'cies will, I doubt not, enable you to 'make ſuch obſervations as may here-'after be of ſervice to your country. 'I think,' purſued he, 'there is no ne-'ceſſity for putting you under the care 'of any perſon by way of governor; 'you are now arrived at years, and, I

'flatter

'flatter myself, at discretion enough to be 'trusted by yourself: as to the rest, you 'may depend that I shall spare nothing 'to render the tour you make agreeable 'to you; and that, whatever remittances you shall have occasion for, 'from time to time, shall be punctually 'sent to you, on a letter of advice.'

This crowned all the other favours Clyamon had received from his indulgent uncle; and, it is not to be doubted, drew from him the most grateful acknowledgments. It was necessary, however, Avario should be consulted: the matter accordingly was proposed to him; on which he testified that he was not void of natural affection, by the reluctance he expressed for exposing so deserving a son to the dangers of travelling; but the arguments urged by Sir Arthur, and the entreaties of Clyamon, at length prevailed on him to consent. Clyamon soon made it appear that it was not to gratify a vain, unprofitable curiosity, but the laudable ambition of improving his mind, that had made him so desirous of going abroad. The letters he wrote to his father and uncle, from France, Italy, Sweden, and several parts of Germany, would have been very well worth inserting in this work; but, to the misfortune of the publick, I was not then in possession of my wonderful Tablets; and though I heard them read more than once, can remember little of the particulars they contain. This worthy young gentleman had gleaned from every field he passed through whatever he found capable of increasing the treasures of his mind; and, in somewhat more than two years, returned to England, full fraught, though not burthened, with understanding, and an experience far above his years.

I might here entertain my reader with the joy he was received with by his father and uncle, the compliments made to him by the gentry in that part of the country, and acclamations of the lower sort of people; but I have no time to waste in such minute particulars, and must proceed to more material circumstances. Clyamon had no great relish for the country; he soon grew weary of it's amusements: he loved company, and had been accustomed to a good deal, both at Oxford, as well as while he was on his travels; and, on account of the great distance between the gentlemen's seats in that country, his uncle's love of retirement, and his father's parsimony, neither of their houses were much frequented. He wanted to come to London; he had never been three whole weeks together in it, and thought he ought to be better acquainted with what was done in the capital of the kingdom. Sir Arthur was also willing he should be known in a place where the accomplishments he had given him might be rendered more conspicuous; but as he had more than performed the part of an uncle, and fully discharged him of the promise he had made to Avario concerning his education, he thought it was now high time for that gentleman to take upon him the father, and make a settlement for his son sufficient to enable him to appear in the world according to the estate he was born to inherit. This proposition was not altogether so pleasing to Avario as it ought to have been; but as he could find nothing to alledge against the reasonableness of it, he only evaded complying with it at present by some trifling excuse or other, till Clyamon, unable to conceal his discontent, Sir Arthur pressed more strenuously in his favour than he had done before, and at length, though with much difficulty, drew from that niggardly parent the scanty sum of fifty guineas. This was a light loading for the purse of a young gentleman bred in the manner Clyamon had been, and could not be expected to hold out long in so expensive a town as London. Avario, however, accompanied it with a promise of letting him have more as soon as he received money from his tenants, who, he pretended, had been tardy in their payments of late, and occasioned his being very much out of cash.

Clyamon could not keep himself from being extremely shocked at this treatment from a father who had been at no expence for him since he was ten years old. Sir Arthur was no less chagrined, though he concealed it from his nephew; and putting a Bank bill of fifty pounds into his hand, said to him—'My dear Clyamon, I would not have 'you be disconcerted. You know your 'father's temper; but the more he 'hoards, the more will be your own at 'his decease. In the mean time, be 'assured I will not forsake you; I will 'continually urge him on your behalf, 'and also privately supply you when-'ever he is deficient: live therefore like 'yourself,

, yourself, and be entirely easy.' These comfortable words, from a mouth on which he knew he might depend, made Clyamon set out chearfully for London; but what happened to him after his arrival, must be the subject of another chapter.

CHAP. IX.

IS A CONTINUANCE OF WHAT THE FORMER BUT BEGAN.

THOUGH Clyamon never had an opportunity of making much acquaintance in this metropolis, and now arrived here at a season in which great part of the nobility and gentry retire to their country seats, yet was he soon known, and his conversation courted by those of the best rank who still remained in town. There were no operas indeed, no plays, no masquerades, to entertain him, but the gardens of Ranelagh, Vauxhall, and Mary-le-bon; or, to speak more properly, the gay company that frequent those places left him no want of any other amusement. The love of pleasure can never continue ungratified in a town like this; and it is not to be wondered at, if it sometimes got the better of all Clyamon's discretion; nor, if surrounded with temptations, that he could not always keep himself from giving way to passions which, in youth, and a sprightly disposition, are so natural, that they scarce deserve the name of faults. It is not my business to detain the reader's attention with an account of his gallantries with the fair-sex, if any of the particulars had come to my knowledge, which I freely confess they did not; I shall only say, that he had no amour which could call his honour in question, bring him into quarrels, or be productive of any other unhappy consequences.

The only mistake in conduct he had any great reason to repent of, he was led into more by the prevalence of example than inclination. He had never been in the least tainted with that epidemick vice the love of gaming, and rather wondered at the pleasure he saw it give others, than desired to be a partaker of it himself; yet did he inadvertently suffer himself one evening to engage in a party at that dangerous amusement, which he knew had proved so fatal to many of the most opulent fortunes, and utterly unsuitable to a person in his present circumstances. The persons he played with were well experienced, and great proficients in their arts: they let him win at first some pieces; and this imaginary success luring him to go on, he became at length a loser of about seventy pounds; a trifling sum to a gentleman of his appearance, yet three times more than he at that time was master of.

He dissembled his chagrin as well as he was able, but confessed he had not that sum about him, and would send it the next morning: on which they told him his honour was a sufficient stake for ten times as much as he had lost, and would fain have prevailed with him to have played on; but he now saw the folly he had been guilty of, so pretending he had business, took leave of the company, carrying with him a humour very different from what he had brought, and from what he had ever been possessed of in his whole life before. Impossible is it to express, as he afterwards told me, how much he was disconcerted at this unlucky event: he knew it was expected he should promise to send the money next morning,' and by what means he should acquit himself of that promise, and redeem his honour, puzzled him to a degree that made him almost distracted. He has often protested that he never closed his eyes in sleep during that whole night, but passed his restless hours in contriving how to extricate himself from the labyrinth into which he had so foolishly strayed. After much revolving in his mind, he at last bethought himself of borrowing the sum he wanted of a young gentleman with whom he was extremely intimate, and had a good fortune.

Pursuant to this resolution, he rose the next morning more early than he was accustomed, and went to his friend, who was not yet stirring; but on saying he had business of importance to impart to him, was easily admitted to his chamber. He told him, in few words, what had happened, the vexatious situation he was in, and the necessity he was under of borrowing a small sum, till he could receive a remittance from the country; to which the other replied—' Upon my ' soul, dear Clyamon, I should be glad ' to serve you on this occasion, but, ' faith, it is not in my power at present; ' it is not a week ago since I lost five

'hundred pounds at that damned whist; 'and this, with some other demands 'lately made upon me, have quite 'drained me of all my ready cash. But 'I will tell you what I can do for you; 'I know a man who has often supplied 'me, and several of my acquaintance, 'when they have had a bad run at play. 'He has always money by him, and 'will lend you what sum you please on 'your advancing a premium. I will 'rise this minute, and go with you to 'him.'

Clyamon was highly pleased at this offer; and, while the other was dressing, reflecting within himself how his affairs stood, and that the little presents he had received from his father and uncle being now almost exhausted, he should soon have calls for more money than his gaming debt; thought it best, since he must borrow, to borrow as much as would supply his expences till his father should be prevailed upon to make him a settlement, which he flattered himself would be in a short time. He communicated his intention to the gentleman, who approved it; and having got himself ready, they went together to old Grub, for so the usurer was called. The wretch was just coming out of his house when they came to it. On seeing them, he turned back, and conducted them into a little dirty parlour; but as the discourse that passed between them was somewhat extraordinary, I thought it worth writing down, as Clyamon some time after repeated it to me word for word.

Grub. So, my young squire!—'Tis a wonder to see you out of your bed before the sun has run three quarters of his course at least. I suppose you want a little of my assistance; that brings you abroad thus early.

Gentleman. No, faith, Grub, not at present; but I have a friend here that does.

Grub. Your friend is welcome; I will serve him if I can.—Pray, Sir, what can I do for you?

Clyamon. Sir, a present emergency lays me under a necessity of raising two hundred pounds immediately; if you have that sum by you, this gentleman will inform you who I am, and that I want neither the power nor the will to discharge any obligation I shall enter into on that score.

Gentleman. Aye, aye, Grub, his note is as good as the Bank of England; you need not fear your money. His name is ****; he is an only son, and heir to near two thousand pounds a year.

Grub. The gentleman has an honest face, indeed.

Gentleman. If you have any scruple, Grub, I will join in the note with all my soul.

Grub. I believe there is no great occasion; only in case of accidents a collateral security may be necessary.

Gentleman. Well, well, you shall have it.

Grub. I suppose, Sir, you have acquainted the gentleman with the common way of dealing in these affairs?

Clyamon. Sir, I am willing to allow you any interest for your money that you can in reason desire.

Grub. Sir, I am never out of reason with any man. As to interest, it is quite out of the question; I shall take no more than what the law allows: but when we advance money upon a pinch, a certain premium is expected.

Clyamon. Please to name it.

Grub. Let me see—you want two hundred pounds immediately, you say. It is but a trifling sum, indeed; but too much for a poor man like me to lose: we who lend money this way run a great risque. Not that I doubt you, nor am unwilling to advance the money; but I think you can do no less than add an odd fifty in the note you make.

Clyamon. How, Sir! fifty pounds for the loan of two hundred, besides the interest!

Grub. Lookye, Sir, I would not have you imagine I deal hardly with you. If you brought me a note on the best tradesman in the city, payable one month after date, I do assure you that I would not discount it a farthing less than twenty per cent. Consider, Sir, I may lie a great while out of my money. Disappointments sometimes happen; and when they do, I have not the heart to be severe in point of time; I scorn to distress a gentleman when I find he has it not in his power to pay, unless I hear he is going out of the kingdom, or to enter into the army; and then, indeed, it behoves me to take care of myself.

Clyamon, in favouring me with the recital of this dialogue, told me, that he had not presence enough of mind to keep the shock he felt at so exorbitant a demand

mand from being visible to the usurer; who looking on him with no very pleasing aspect, said to him—

Grub. I perceive you are dissatisfied, Sir; and if so, I can keep my money, and you may try to supply yourself at a cheaper rate elsewhere. For my part, I am at no loss how to dispose of the little I have: there are enow will be glad to receive it on the terms I offered you; and, it may be, not grumble to allow me a better advantage.

Gentleman. Nay—pshaw—pr'ythee, Grub, don't be out of humour! My friend is not accustomed to these things, and I had not time to inform him before we came.

Grub. Sir, I bear a conscience, and am above imposing on any one. I am ashamed to think of what is practised at some great coffee-houses that shall be nameless; where, if a gentleman is necessitated to borrow ten pieces, he returns twenty for it the next morning, or, it may be, the same night. No, no; such things are an abomination to me: I desire no more than a living profit; and whoever does not approve of my conditions, is at liberty to reject them; there is no harm done.

Clyamon. Not in the least, Sir: and as this is the first time I ever had occasion to become a borrower, and was utterly ignorant of the methods I should take in such a situation, I may deserve forgiveness.

Thus was poor Clyamon compelled, by his impatience to discharge his debt of honour, to acquiesce to the excuse made for him by his friend, and comply with the extortioner's demand. On which Grub was easily brought into temper again; a note was presently drawn for two hundred and fifty pounds; and being signed by both the gentlemen, the whole sum mentioned in it was delivered to Clyamon, who put two hundred pounds into his pocket, and returned the other fifty to Grub: 'This, 'Sir,' said the old wary curmudgeon, 'I receive as a present from you, and 'thank you for it.' Clyamon also, in his turn, thanked him for the favour he had just conferred upon him; after which they departed, seemingly with the most perfect good-will towards each other: but it is a truth almost unquestionable, that the lender of this money had infinitely more satisfaction in his mind than the borrower could possibly have. Dearly, indeed, did he pay for the means of discharging an obligation which his inadvertency had brought him under: it was, however, of this service to him, that it made him detest high gaming ever since, and careful to avoid all company that might draw him into a second misfortune of the same kind; as I remember to have formerly read in a very old, and now almost exploded author—

'Wise is the man who, by one error taught,
'No more is in the same temptation caught.'

There is a way of refraining from being guilty of indiscreet actions, without affecting to be over wise. Clyamon had this happy talent. He knew very well, that for a person of his years to set up for a dictator, instead of reforming his companions, would only incur their ridicule; and therefore contented himself with not making a party in the modish vices and follies he was spectator of, without seeming to condemn or be displeased at them. Conscious that, on his first arrival in town, he had not taken all the care he should have done to regulate his way of living according to his present circumstances, he began to retrench his expences as much as possibly he could, without letting the world see he did so, or sinking too much beneath the character of a gentleman born to inherit the ample fortune he was. But in spite of this somewhat too late assumed œconomy, he soon found himself in a very great necessity for a fresh supply. He had been in London from the latter end of May to the beginning of October, and had received no remittances from the country since he left it. All his uncle's remonstrances had not yet prevailed upon his father to make the proposed settlement on him: the usurer's loan was quite exhausted; and he had, besides, other small debts to his tradesmen, some of whom had already sent in their bills.

To add to these vexations, Grub visited him almost every day, complained he was out of cash himself, and at length grew very importunate, and plainly told him, that he could lie no longer out of his money, and that if he did not speedily discharge the note, he must take proper measures to force him to it. In this exigence, he wrote a very pressing letter to his father, intreating an order on his banker in London; but the obdurate

Avario only sent him an answer to this effect; that it was inconvenient for him to break into the sum in the hands of his banker; said he must wait awhile; that he should be in town himself the ensuing November, on the meeting of parliament, and that then he would do something for him: in the mean time bid him live sparingly, and shun all places and company that might draw him into any unnecessary expence.

Poor Clyamon had need enough for all that stock of spirits which nature had endued him with, to enable him to bear up amidst the persecutions of his voracious creditors, and the unnatural behaviour of his father. He had now no other resource remaining, than an application to Sir Arthur; but very loth he was to be troublesome to that dear and beneficent uncle, to whom alone he was indebted for what he looked upon as infinitely more valuable than his being, his education; and was with much debate within himself, whether it were not better to endure the insults he was exposed to, rather than run the risque of displeasing a patron he had so much cause to love and reverence. But while he continued thus irresolute in his mind, an accident happened which put a final end to all the contention in his thoughts on that score, by presenting him with a misfortune, which was the more severe, by it's being sudden and unapprehended.

The good Sir Arthur Frankwill died: Fate snatched him from the world at once, without the least previous warning; and allowed no time for the making bequests, either to his beloved Clyamon, or any other person, who else he might have thought worthy of a place in his remembrance; so that leaving no will behind him, his whole estate, together with all the personal effects he was possessed of, devolved on a son of his elder sister, as being the first of blood, and heir at law; a gentleman who had always looked upon Clyamon with too envious an eye to have any sincere friendship for him. The first account of this misfortune was transmitted to Clyamon in a letter from the above-mentioned kinsman, and contained the following lines—

'DEAR COUSIN,

'THIS comes to acquaint you with 'the loss we both sustain by the 'death of our dear uncle, who departed 'this life six days ago. He was seized 'with an apoplectick fit, out of which 'he never recovered, in spite of all the 'endeavours that could be used. I did 'not send to desire your company at 'the funeral, as it would have been a 'superfluous compliment to him, and 'a great fatigue and expence to your-'self in coming so long a journey; but 'as I am sensible of the affection he had 'always for you, I inclose a Bank bill 'of twenty pounds for mourning. I 'intend to dispose of my uncle's house 'as soon as I can hear of a purchaser, 'and am now sending away all the fur-'niture, so can make no invitation to 'you to come hither; but shall be glad 'if you pass a few days with me at 'T——, on your return into the coun-'try. So the hurry I am in at present, 'permits me to add no more, than that 'I am, &c.

'G. HAWKSMORE.'

It is certain, at this time, and indeed almost at any other, there were few things could have happened more unfortunately for Clyamon than the death of his uncle; as he had not only lost in him an indulgent parent, a tender friend, and a kind protector, who had promised never to forsake him, but also the only person in the world who had the most influence over his father, and by whose intercession he hoped to have been soon relieved from the precarious situation he was at present in. He had scarce time enough to recover himself from the first emotions of grief, on the above-mentioned melancholy account, when he received private intelligence that Grub intended to arrest him, and had even employed a sheriff's officer for that purpose. He had no way to prevent this affront but by flying for refuge to the verge of the court; which he accordingly did, and took a lodging in Scotland Yard. Grub soon heard of his retreat; traced him to his asylum; and endeavoured, by all the means he could, to render it of no service to him: but Clyamon had laid his case before the board of green cloth, who had assured him of their protection, till the arrival of his father should discharge this troublesome affair.

The time was now near in which Avario was expected, and he staid not many days beyond it; but his presence rather augmented, than put an end to the

the distress of Clyamon. That unnatural parent, on finding the condition he was in, flew into the extremest rage; reproached his extravagancies, as he called them, in the most bitter terms; swore he would see him sink under the calamity to which he had reduced himself, rather than give a single guinea to relieve him from it; and even cursed the memory of the good Sir Arthur, for having indulged him, as he said, in notions so contrary to what he ought to have been inspired with. It was in vain that Clyamon endeavoured to alleviate his fury; he would hearken to no excuses, be softened by no submissions he could make. One of the gentlemen of the honourable board, at Clyamon's request, urged the defence of that young gentleman in the strongest terms; but Avario for many days continued deaf to all remonstrances in his behalf, and gave no other answer, than that, as his son had brought himself into this trouble by his folly, he must endeavour to get out of it by his wit. This cruel sarcasm, when repeated to Clyamon, made him almost forget the duty of a son; and, as he confessed to me, ready to burst into exclamations which he would afterwards have reproached himself for having been guilty of uttering, or even thinking of.

Grub, and some other of his creditors, finding they could do no more to him in the place where he was, took their revenge in persecuting him with unceasing clamours; which threw him sometimes into such fits of melancholy, that if he had not been furnished with a great stock of morality and good sense, would doubtless have pushed him on some desperate method to end those misfortunes which he saw no probability of being removed from. Avario, in the mean time, notwithstanding his churlish and sordid disposition, was far from being easy in his mind. The first gust of passion being blown over, the merits of Clyamon rose in opposition to the fault he had been guilty of, and made it by degrees seem less; he could not forbear remembering that he was his son, and such a son as every one who was a father wished his own might copy after. In fine, nature and reason joined their forces, and pleaded strongly in behalf of Clyamon, and almost wrought him to forgiveness; but as often as he reflected how much it would cost to pardon him, and that he could not receive him into favour without payment of his debts, the thoughts of parting with his money gave a sudden check to his paternal inclinations.

At length, however, some hints which Clyamon dropped in one of the many petitionary letters he sent to him, making him apprehensive that the most dreadful consequences might attend the despair of his offending son, he became determined to do something for him. He sent a person to him with ten guineas for his present support, and an offer of making up his affairs, in case he could prevail on his creditors to compound for the one half of what was owing to them. Clyamon accepted of his father's present, trifling as it was, with submission; but could not forbear testifying the utmost disdain at proposing of a composition; for besides being certain that it would never be complied with, the thing itself appeared to him so abject, that he chose to suffer any thing rather than demean himself to mention it. This refusal put Avario into a second flame; but he soon cooled again: and, after some little conflict within himself, the necessity there was of restoring the liberty of an only son, got the better of his love of money. Loth, however, to part with his darling pence as long as there was a possibility of keeping them, he found out an expedient to protract the doing a thing so irksome to him: he communicated his intentions to Clyamon in a letter, which that young gentleman shewing me afterwards, I found contained words to this effect—

'SON,

'THOUGH I have been justly irri-
'tated against you, first by your
'extravagancies, and since by your late
'obstinacy, yet I cannot forget I am
'your father, nor suffer you to sink be-
'neath those misfortunes your folly
'and disobedience have brought you
'into. I have resolved to pay all your
'debts before I leave London; but as it
'is not convenient for me to do it
'sooner, would not have you venture
'out of the verge, for fear of bringing
'yourself into disgrace, and an addi-
'tional expence on me for your re-
'lease. In the mean time, am content
'to allow you two guineas and a half
'per week, for the subsistence of your-
'self and servant. It is expected we

'shall

'shall be dissolved about the middle of 'February, when writs will be issued 'out for a new election; and I shall 'then set you clear in the world, and 'take you home with me; for I do not 'think it advisable you should live in 'this luxurious town, till you are bet-'ter acquainted with the true value of 'money than you seem to be at present. 'I hope, notwithstanding, that your 'future behaviour will atone for the er-'rors of the past, and I shall have no oc-'casion to repent the proof I now give 'you of being your affectionate father,

'AVARIO.'

The joy Clyamon would have felt, on finding full satisfaction would be given to the demands of his impatient creditors, was very much abated by the thoughts of being obliged to reside constantly with his father in the country; as the manner in which he knew he must live would be very disagreeable to his humour, and widely different from what he had been accustomed to with his uncle. It also seemed a little hard to him, that by delaying the discharge of his debts till his departure, he should be secluded from all enjoyment of the pleasures of the town, even while he continued in it: but he saw into the policy of his father in doing this; and, as there was no remedy, endeavoured to be as contented as possible. In the answer he gave to his father's letter, he expressed himself in terms highly pleasing to him, and brought on a perfect reconciliation, as will presently appear, on occasion of an accident which happened soon after.

CHAP. X.

CONCLUDES A NARRATIVE WHICH HAS SOMEWHAT IN IT THAT WILL, IN A MANNER, COMPEL THOSE WHO SHALL BE MOST OFFENDED TO COUNTERFEIT AN APPROBATION, FOR THE SAKE OF THEIR OWN REPUTATION.

THOUGH the greatest intimacy with Clyamon, and a long acquaintance with Avario, made me no stranger even to the minute particulars of the transaction I am relating—I mean as far as I could be informed by the perfect confidence with which I was honoured by both these gentlemen—yet, as no sure dependance can be placed either on what people say of themselves, or the report given of them by others, I should never have ventured to speak so positively in many things as I have done, if the gift of Invisibility had not afforded me an opportunity of accompanying them when they thought themselves entirely alone, and of beholding them in those unguarded attitudes which are the best and only certain discoverers of the inward workings of the human mind.

It was my dear Belt could have alone convinced me that, contrary to the general opinion of the world, it was not ill-nature in Avario, or the ignorance of what he ought to do, which had hindered him from being an affectionate husband, a tender father, a faithful friend, and an indulgent master; but merely his inordinate love of money, and an unaccountable apprehension of being reduced to the want of it, that made him center his whole cares in his bags, regardless of all the ties of blood and nature, and rendered him almost incapable of practising any social virtue.

It was by this beneficial present that I became assured Clyamon was much more worthy than he took any pains to appear; that in all serious matters he was steady and unshaken, and in his pleasures decent and well-mannered; and that, young as he was, he had set up a tribunal in his own heart, where reason presiding as his sole judge, carefully examined all his actions, and whatever unruly passion had got the start, stopped it in it's career, and brought it back to obedience.

Many interesting circumstances relating to this affair between father and son, are lost to the publick by my having been deprived for some time of my Chrystaline Tablets, which had been stolen from me, with several other things of much less, though more seeming value, by an unfaithful servant; but the villain finding, I suppose, that he could make nothing of the Tablets, and looking upon them only as a curiosity which would please nobody so much as myself, sealed them up, and caused them to be left for me at a coffee-house. My joy at getting them again, made me forgive the rest of the robbery, and seek no farther after the thief. I recovered my purloined treasure just about the time

that

that Clyamon was in the above-mentioned situation; so that what remains to be recited of this narrative, will be chiefly taken from the mouths of the persons concerned in it. I was one morning in Clyamon's apartment, under the cover of my Belt, when a young gentleman of the name of Careless came to visit him. After exchanging the *bon jour*, and some other customary salutations, Careless began the conversation between them in these terms—

Careless. Where do you think I was yesterday?

Clyamon. I am no conjuror.

Careless. Guess.

Clyamon. It would be a needless trouble; pr'ythee spare it me.

Careless. Why, faith, in the gallery of the House of Commons.

Clyamon. The House of Commons! It must be a business of vast importance sure, that could carry a fellow of thy gay, sprightly temper, into that grave, venerable place.

Careless. No, thank Heaven! business and I are perfect strangers to each other; but I had an hour or two upon my hands, and went thither merely to kill time: but was never more diverted in my whole life, than to see how some young members, who had got their heads together, and were giggling over a copy of verses inscribed to Fanny Murray, were put to silence in an instant, and looked as silly as a school-boy under the lash of correction, on the speaker's crying out, with an audible and austere voice—'To order, gentle-'men!—for shame!—to order.'

Clyamon. Methinks, indeed, they might have found a more proper place and time for laughter. Was my father in the house, pray?

Careless. O yes; and I assure you the old gentleman made as wise a figure as any there: he said nothing indeed, but sat as serious as a judge upon a criminal cause, leaning both his hands upon his gold headed cane, and his chin upon his hands, and listening with great attention to a very long, and, I suppose, learned harangue, of a leading member. —How do you design to dispose of yourself to-day?

Clyamon. I have not yet considered.

Careless. 'Tis a glorious morning! —Are you for the Park? I come on purpose to ask you.

Clyamon. With all my heart.

Careless. Come along, then. I dare swear the Mall is half full by this time. Let us go, and laugh at the great vulgar and the small, as Cowley says.

Just as they were going out of the room, a letter was presented to Clyamon from his father; which he turning back to read, I stepped behind him, and found it contained these lines—

'DEAR CLY,

'I Have something to impart to you, 'which is of the utmost consequence 'to my peace of mind, and your future 'happiness: be careful, therefore, not 'to be out of the way to-morrow morn-'ing, when I shall call upon you as I 'go to the House; for what I have to 'propose cannot be settled too soon. Be 'assured I am impatient to see you make 'as good a figure in the world as I 'think you deserve; and that no more 'is required of you, than a just sense 'of your duty to me, and a regard for 'what is your own interest, to preserve 'me always your very indulgent and 'loving father,

'AVARIO.'

Clyamon was so transported with the kindness of this epistle, that he could not forbear shewing it to Careless; who, knowing the temper of Avario, had no sooner looked over, than he said—

Careless. I will lay my life upon it, that the old gentleman has found out some rich widow or heiress for you, with whose fortune you may make a figure in the world, and save his own till he can keep it no longer.

Clyamon. I hope not so, for as yet I have no inclination to marry; and, whenever I do, shall like to have a wife of my own chusing.

Careless. You must be cautious, nevertheless, not to venture a second *brulée* with him; for he seems to have set his heart very much upon this business, whatever it is that he has now got into his head.

Clyamon. Deuce take you for putting it into mine! But I will think no more on it. If the thing should be as you imagine, I shall have time enough to be uneasy after knowing it. But come, 'tis almost two o'clock; let us away.

With these words they went to the Mall, and I returned home; where reflecting, as I always did after these excursions, on what I had seen and heard,

I could

I could not help being of the same opinion with Mr. Careless, as touching the intentions of Avario; and feared that poor Clyamon, with all his merit, would be obliged to become a prey to some old well-jointured Jezebel, or rich dowdy who owed her virginity to her ugliness. By what I have often freely confessed concerning the inquisitiveness of my disposition, the reader will easily suppose I felt no small impatience for the event of Avario's visit to his son; and indeed, I believe that young gentleman himself could scarce be more anxious. That I might lose nothing of what should pass between them, I took care to post myself very early in Clyamon's apartment; and it was well I did so, both for the satisfaction of my own curiosity, and the emolument of the publick, for Avario came in presently after me.

As they had not seen each other for some time, Clyamon threw himself on his knees, and in that posture thanked his father for the pardon he had vouchsafed to his offence, as well as for his kind promise he had given for the discharge of his debts. Avario seemed very much pleased with this submission, raised and embraced him with great affection; and, after they were seated, replied to what he had said in these terms—

Avario. It is a great deal of money, indeed, the folly you have been guilty of will cost me; but it is the first, and, I flatter myself, will be the last I shall have to complain of: so we will say no more of what is past. I came now to talk with you on a subject more agreeable to us both.

Clyamon. I have the greatest reason in the world, Sir, to hope every thing from your goodness.

Avario. Aye, Clyamon, you are my only son. You may be sure I have nothing so much at heart as your welfare, and I think I have now hit upon something that will make you as happy as you can wish to be. Your late uncle, Sir Arthur, was always teazing me on the score of a constant allowance for you out of my estate, to the end you may be in a manner independent, and I have at length resolved to do it.

Clyamon. Whatever you are pleased to grant, Sir, I shall take care to employ so as to give you no cause to repent your bounty.

Avario. But that is not all, Clyamon: what I shall do for you will put you in a way of making yourself a much greater man than you would be by what you will enjoy on my decease.

Clyamon. I am not ambitious, Sir; but shall readily embrace any laudable means of raising my fortune.

Avario. Why, that's well said; and what I have to propose is not only laudable, but honourable too. It is this; you shall be a member of the House of Commons.

Clyamon. Sir, I should be proud to serve my country in any capacity; but in this, fear my youth and inexperience will be very just objections.

Avario. Tut, tut! there are much younger than you in the House; and, though I say it, of much less understanding too. As to the forms that are to be observed there, I can instruct you in them; and as to the rest, you will easily come into it yourself; therefore no more of such idle scruples: an over modesty and diffidence of yourself is the worst quality a man that aims to rise in the world can be possessed of. I have considered on this matter in all it's circumstances, before I mentioned it to you; and, in order to qualify you for a member, have resolved to assign over to you five hundred pounds per annum of my estate.

Clyamon. That, Sir, is more than I could have presumed to ask.

Avario. I mean, the rents of so much shall be received in your name; as to the cash, I think it much safer in my own hands than yours; but you shall want nothing that is necessary: and when the business of parliament calls you to London, give you leave to draw upon me for what sum, or sums, you shall find occasion for, in reason.

Clyamon. This, Sir, is far from putting me out of a state of dependance.

Avario. You ought not to desire it. Your uncle talked foolishly, very foolishly, on this head; and if it had not been for the obligation I had to him on the score of your education, I should have told him so. A son ought always to be dependant on his father; and I think you have very great cause to be content in being so, as you have experienced the paternal affection I have for you, by my readiness to forgive your faults, and to discharge those debts your extravagancies had contracted.

Clyamon. Sir, I shall always retain a grateful

grateful ſenſe of all you have done for me. But pray, Sir, ſince it is your pleaſure that I ſhould be a candidate at the enſuing election, what place have you in your eye for me? I ſuppoſe for ſome borough.

Avario. No, no; for our own county.

Clyamon. Then, Sir, do you decline ſtanding yourſelf?

Avario. Yes, Clyamon. I grow old, and am weary of the fatigue of coming up to London once every year. I find it very expenſive, as well as troubleſome; for though I board while I am here at a pretty cheap rate, with one that was formerly my ſervant, yet I know not how it is, money runs ſtrangely away in this town. Beſides, I do not think I have been well uſed: I have had the honour of repreſenting the county of ***** in three ſucceſſive parliaments, and have got nothing by it, but the honour; and though I have conſtantly voted on the ſide of the court, and whenever any debate of conſequence was to come upon the carpet, have always previouſly attended the levee of the miniſter, to know his will and pleaſure; all the recompence I have had, has been ſometimes a ſhake of the hand, a gracious nod, a ſmile, and 'How does my 'good friend Avario?'

Clyamon. You amaze me, Sir! I never imagined a gentleman had any other intereſt in his election than the pleaſure of having an opportunity to ſerve his country.

Avario. Serve his country!—a fiddle on the country! It would be well worth a gentleman's while, indeed, to cajole, treat, and bribe, every little dirty fellow that has a vote to give; to ſpend ſo much time and money; and, it may be, drink himſelf half dead into the bargain, at his election; if it were not for the ſake of ſerving himſelf, inſtead of the rabble who make choice of him for their repreſentative. No, no, boy; if we had not honour, favour, and preferment, in view, our electors would be obliged to court us to accept their votes, not we to ſolicit them.

Clyamon. But, Sir, ſuppoſing this to be the caſe, how do you think it poſſible I ſhould acquire any of thoſe advantages which you ſay you have failed in the purſuit of yourſelf?

Avario. I'll tell you, Clyamon. I could only give my bare vote for or againſt any queſtion; I never had the gift of either ſpeaking or writing: now I am pretty ſure you can do both; and a pathetick ſpeech, or a ſtrong pamphlet, are prevailing arguments with the miniſtry; a man that can do theſe may have any thing, may make his own price. So, Cly, it will be your own fault, if in a ſeſſions or two you are not above receiving any aſſiſtance from me.

Clyamon. Sir, I ſhall be always ready to exert the little talents I am maſter of to promote whatever I think is for the good of the commonwealth.

Avario. Tut! what have you to do with the commonwealth? You are not to ſet up for a judge of what is for it's good, or what is not ſo; your buſineſs is to pleaſe the miniſter, and to think every thing right he takes upon him to maintain.

Clyamon. But, Sir, how is this conſiſtent with my conſcience or my honour?

Avario. Idle, very idle. I do not like theſe notions, Clyamon; they may tempt you to an oppoſition. I ſhall be afraid you are a Jacobite.

Clyamon. Why, Sir, are all men of honour Jacobites?

Avario. No; but this romantick, unprofitable honour you talk of, is either Jacobitiſm, or ſomething as bad—enthuſiaſm and bigotry. Is not the court the ſource of true honour? Do not all honours, dignities, and promotions, flow from thence? Therefore I ſay, whoever is againſt the court will never riſe to honour, or any thing elſe that is valuable.

Clyamon. Sir, you may be perfectly aſſured, that I ſhall always do my beſt in ſupport of every meaſure which tends to the real honour of his majeſty, and the good of my country; and never oppoſe any which do not oppoſe the conſtitution.

Avario. But you muſt not examine too ſcrupulouſly into theſe things. You are to ſuppoſe that thoſe who are entruſted with the management of publick affairs are better acquainted with the conſtitution than you can pretend to be; and muſt therefore take it for granted, that whatever they ſay or do is right.

Clyamon. But, Sir, does not this implicit faith in the judgment of others, and giving up my own entirely, favour ſomewhat of a ſlaviſh ſubmiſſion?

Avario. No, it is only good policy, and looked upon as ſuch by all who know the world. Indeed, if after your voting, ſpeaking, and writing, they ſhould take no notice of you, it would behove you to pluck up a ſpirit, and extort that reſpect to your reſentment, which they were not grateful enough to pay to your complaiſance. I ſhall then give you leave to oppoſe them in every thing, whether it be wrong or whether it be right.

Clyamon. But would not this changing ſides, Sir, make me become contemptible to both parties?

Avario. Not at all; it is a thing too commonly practiſed to be wondered at, and has often had a very good effect, when nothing elſe would do. Publico, for example. It was a good while, indeed, before they bid up to his price; but they found it neceſſary at laſt, and he now enjoys the fruits of his labour.

Clyamon. Yes, Sir, I have heard of many others who have been bought off the ſame way; but whatever has been done in former adminiſtrations, I hope the preſent will attempt nothing that ought to be oppoſed.

Avario. No, no, you are not to ſuppoſe they will; unleſs, as I juſt now obſerved, they force you to it by neglecting to recompenſe your ſervices.

Clyamon. According to this, Sir, it will be very difficult, if not altogether impoſſible, for the people to diſtinguiſh between thoſe who would defend, and thoſe who would betray and ſacrifice, the liberties of their conſtituents.

Avario. If the people are betrayed and ſacrificed, as you call it, they can blame nobody but themſelves. Why do they take money for their votes? Why do they, like Eſau, ſell their birthrights for a meſs of pottage? When a gentleman buys a county, a borough, or a corporation, he has doubtleſs a right to make the moſt of it he can.

Clyamon. This, Sir, is puniſhing corruption with corruption.

Avario. Aye: is it not juſt it ſhould be ſo? Look ye, Clyamon, you are a novice in theſe affairs as yet, but a little time will make them familiar to you. I do not doubt but I ſhall hear of your being cloſeted by the great man; and when once you are cloſeted, your buſineſs is done; you will have no farther occaſion for my inſtructions or aſſiſtance either. But I ſhall ſay no more at preſent on this head: you muſt think of preparing yourſelf to ſet out on your journey to *****, in a day or two.

Clyamon. What, Sir, before you go?

Avario. Yes, yes. We ſhall not be diſſolved ſo ſoon as we expected. I do not believe I ſhall be able to get down theſe ſix weeks or two months. There have been ſome odd turns of late: but no matter; they are ſecrets, and muſt be kept ſo. But it is highly neceſſary you ſhould begin to make your intereſt: you are already known to the greateſt part of the gentry, and I am pretty ſure they will be all for you to a man. You muſt cultivate an acquaintance with the freeholders, ride about among them, invite ſome of the moſt leading men home, treat them handſomely, and make little preſents to their wives and daughters, of ſnuff-boxes, rings, necklaces, and ſuch toys, to pleaſe their fancies. I will get a friend of mine to purchaſe a cargo of them for you to take down, and will write to my ſteward to furniſh you with what money you ſhall have occaſion for.

Clyamon. Do they know, Sir, that you intend to decline ſtanding any more?

Avario. Not yet; but I ſhall write to night to inform them of it, and to urge all my friends in your behalf. I hear your couſin Hawkſmore has taken it into his head to offer himſelf as a candidate; and though he is not beloved, on account of the buſtle he made about turnpikes, yet the large eſtate he is now in poſſeſſion of by the death of Sir Arthur, may give him an influence over ſome people. So there is no time to be loſt: I would have you leave London on Monday next. I have given orders that all your creditors ſhall be paid their full demands this day, and I think you can have no other buſineſs of conſequence to detain you here.

Clyamon. None at all, Sir.

Avario. Well then, what friends you have to take leave of, you may ſee this afternoon; and come and dine with me to-morrow. It is Sunday, and you know is a leiſure day, and I ſhall be at home. Though I am a boarder, I believe you will be welcome; or it may be I ſhall add a diſh to the table; therefore do not fail to come.

Clyamon. You may depend, Sir, that

that this command is too agreeable to me not to be punctually obeyed.

The old gentleman then said no more; but, after giving his son a gracious nod, went out of the room, with a countenance which denoted the most perfect satisfaction of mind. Clyamon waited on him down stairs; and I intended to follow, as soon as his return should give me an opportunity of going down; but was retarded by Mr. Careless, who came in immediately after Avario was out of the house. This gentleman, who it seems has a sincere friendship for Clyamon, had been extremely impatient, and indeed more anxious than could have been expected from a person of his gay, thoughtless disposition, to know the event of the letter he had received from his father, had been come to the house some time, and waited in the parlour till the departure of Avario made it proper for him to appear. Almost the first salutation he gave to Clyamon contained an entreaty for the satisfaction of his curiosity in this point, which the other very readily complied with, in general terms; but had too much discretion to expose his father's mercenary views; or, by relating the design he had of making him a member of parliament, reveal the motives he had for doing so, or the instructions he had given him for his behaviour after he should be elected.

Mr. Careless, after having congratulated his friend on his being re-established in the good graces of his father, and the honour that was about to recede to him, said a great many pleasant and spirited things to him on the occasion of his being likely to become a member of that august and respectable assembly. But the particulars of this discourse, entertaining as it was, I am entirely unable to repeat, my Tablets being already crouded with the preceding dialogue; and all I can remember is, that the two gentlemen, after chatting away an hour, agreed to dine together that day, and to that end adjourned to a tavern in the neighbourhood, leaving me at liberty to retire to my own apartment. I was extremely pleased with finding, by what I had seen that day of Clyamon, that I had not been deceived in the high-raised expectations I had entertained of his good sense and probity; and also with perceiving that Avario, in spite of his sordid and avaricious disposition, could not help allowing the merits of a son, whose sentiments and principles were, in almost every thing, so directly opposite to his own.

The evening of the next day this worthy young gentleman called upon me, as he returned from having passed the former part of it with his father. He was much less reserved with me than he had been with Mr. Careless, which convinced me he knew how to refrain unbosoming himself to those whose solidity he had cause to doubt, and took a pleasure in being entirely open to those on whom he could depend that his confidence would not be abused either by wantonness or neglect. He repeated to me the rules prescribed to him by his father for the regulation of his conduct in parliament, and expressed the little obligation he thought himself under to him on that score, in terms the most strong and pathetick. These are some of his words—'The love of my country,' said he, 'I look upon as the first and 'greatest moral duty of mankind; and I 'think I may venture to assure myself, 'that I shall never be tempted to re-'nounce it on the prospect of any ad-'vantage offered, in what shape so-'ever.'

I then told him, that I believed the bulk of the people owed the grievances they complained of, greatly to the luxury of their representatives; who, having impaired their estates in the modish excesses of the times, found themselves under a necessity of entering into measures which otherwise they would never have complied with. 'Perhaps, too,' added I, 'to gratify the ambition of a 'beloved wife, or prevent the clamour 'of a turbulent one, may be one rea-'son to which the infringement of pub-'lick liberty may be ascribed.' Clyamon listened with great attention to what I said; and joining in my opinion, replied, that his own observation of some late instances confirmed the truth of this argument. 'The first of these 'excitements,' continued he, 'I have 'already experienced the danger of 'through my inadvertency, and shall 'be wary to avoid the snare in which I 'have been once entangled; and, as for 'the other, if ever I marry, shall en-'deavour to get a wife as near as pos-'sible to the description given by the 'poet of his mistress—

'——————A maid
'Who knows not courts, yet courts does far
' outſhine
'In every ſtarry beauty of the mind;
'One who, array'd in native loveline ſs,
'And ſweet ſimplicity, deſpiſes art;
'And has a ſoul too great to ſtoop to
' pride,
'With the mean ways by which it aims at
' grandeur.'

With theſe diſcourſes we paſſed the time he ſtaid. I have not ſeen him ſince, but heard of his ſafe arrival at *****. Whether he will be elected for that county, cannot be determined at the time of my writing this; ſo can only ſay, that if he is, I doubt not but his character will appear to much more advantage, than in the faint ſketch I have here been able to give of it.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

THE

INVISIBLE SPY.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

BOOK V.

CHAP. I.

THE AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION TO THIS VOLUME CONSISTS ONLY OF AN APOLOGY FOR MAKING NO INTRODUCTION AT ALL, AND HIS REASONS FOR THAT OMISSION.

SINCE my ſetting about this work, I have ſeen ſeveral late treatiſes that are half taken up with introductory prefaces to the publick. On a ſerious examination to what end thoſe long diſcourſes were penned, they ſeemed to me to have been occaſioned either by one or the other of the following motives: firſt, that an author having contracted with his bookſeller for a certain number of ſheets, without having well conſidered whether his head be ſtored with ſubject matter to make good his engagement, finds himſelf under a neceſſity of filling up the vacant pages by ſaying ſomething by way of an introduction, preface, or advertiſement to the reader; or, ſecondly, that fearing the eyes of the publick will not be ſufficiently open to the merit of his performance, or, perhaps, not have the curioſity even to look into it at all, he thinks proper to beſpeak their favour by a pompous prelude, and founds his own praiſes, like a trumpet at the door of a puppet-ſhew.

Now I am too great a lover of liberty ever to bind myſelf by any ſuch ſlaviſh agreement. The firſt of theſe incentives is quite out of the queſtion, and cannot poſſibly have any weight with me; and as to the ſecond, as a more perfect knowledge of myſelf than I perceive ſome others have will not permit me to be over vain in any thing I do, ſo the indolence of my nature will not permit me to be over anxious for the ſucceſs. Beſides, not having the temptation of the motives aforeſaid, I have more adventures to relate than can be eaſily crouded into this volume; therefore have neither time nor paper to ſpare for an addreſs, which would afford ſo little ſatisfaction to myſelf in the writing, and perhaps leſs to my reader in the peruſing.

CHAP. II.

CONTAINS SUCH MATTER AS, IT IS HIGHLY PROBABLE, WILL BE THE LEAST PLEASING TO THOSE FOR WHOSE SERVICE IT IS MOST INTENDED.

THERE is, according to the wiſe man's phraſe, a folly under the ſun, which, in my opinion, has as little to

to be said for it as any of the many other of the present age; and that is, an insatiable inquisitiveness into future events; as if the foreknowledge of what is to come, would enable us either to alleviate or avert the decrees of Providence: yet are all ages, all degrees, of both sexes, tainted more or less with this epidemick frenzy. It cannot but afford the most astonishing, as well as melancholy reflections, in a thinking mind, to observe how many impostors, in and about this great town, are maintained by pretending to the art of divination, while the industrious followers of lawful occupations perish for want of due encouragement.

As I was one day on my Invisible Progressions, I accompanied a mingled crowd of people into a house situated in one of the most obscure parts of the city. At first I imagined that this was some private chapel, where persons resorted to pay their adorations to the Deity in a manner not authorized by the government; but was soon convinced of my mistake, when, instead of a pulpit and desk, I found the room we came into furnished only with globes and telescopes, and other implements of a soothsayer and astrologer. I had not patience to hear what idle predictions this oracle would spout forth, especially as I had no acquaintance with any of those who I saw came to consult him; so took my leave of the deceiver and the deceived, full of indignation against the one, and a pity, mingled with contempt, for the other: for what can be said in defence of the understanding of those people who waste their time and money in consulting those abject dealers in futurity! creatures who would make you believe they can read the most hidden decrees of fate in the grounds of coffee, tea, and chocolate! I had often heard much talk of these conjurors, but not till I was convinced by the testimony of my own senses, could ever be brought to believe, that persons endowed with a liberal education could descend so far as to listen to their inconsistent prate, much less give credit to what they uttered; but so strong is the desire of looking into the seeds of time, especially among the fair sex, that sometimes the most proud, as well as the most nice and delicate, will throw aside all consideration of what they are, or would be thought, and, for the sake of being told their fortune, send for, caress, and associate themselves with, the very lowest and most dirty wretches in human nature.

Lysetta is descended from a very ancient and honourable house. She lived till considerably turned on the wrong side of thirty without discovering the least inclination for marriage, much less gave any room for the most censorious ever to suspect she encouraged any private gallantries; and the whole tenor of her conduct was such, as no one could imagine her capable of harbouring any notions beneath the dignity of her birth and character. A long acquaintance gave me the privilege of visiting her pretty frequently, and never was denied access. I was one day at her house when she had no other company than a young lady with whom she was extremely intimate. While we were drinking tea, her woman came running into the room, and with a significant tone of voice, said—'Madam, the woman you know of is below.'—'Tis very well,' replied Lysetta; 'shew her into my chamber, and bid her stay a little.' Then turning to her friend, they smiled on each other, nodded, winked, and seemed big with some secret between themselves.

I found, by all this, that my presence might very well be spared at this time; so turned down my cup, and took my leave. As I was going down stairs, I heard Lysetta order herself to be denied to whoever should come that evening; which convincing me of what I before had reason to imagine, that there was something more than ordinary in hand, I resolved, if possible, to fathom the mystery. Accordingly I went home, popped on my Invisible Belt, put my Tablets in my pocket, and returned with all speed. A lazy footman, lolling against a post, with the door wide open behind him, gave me an easy entrance into the house. I very well knew the situation of Lysetta's chamber, and went directly thither; but, to my great mortification, found the ladies had bolted themselves in; and all I could distinguish of what was doing, for some time, was only the hoarse bass of a loud laugh from Lysetta, and the squeaking treble of a shrill tee-hee from the other.

I stood centinel, however, at the top of the stair-case, and at last was happily relieved. Lysetta opened the door, and called

R. Smirke. del. Walker. sculp.

late III.

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called to her woman to bring clean cups. Having now gained admittance, I ſoon perceived what they were about. A coffee-pot upon the table; the dregs of the liquor it had contained poured into a baſon; ſeveral cups, with more figures on the inſide than the outſide, and the yet recent circles they had left on being whelmed down on a damaſk napkin ſpread on one corner of the table; preſently informed me they were employed in the art and myſtery of conjuration. The prieſteſs of theſe farcical rites was a mean-habited, ill-looked woman; and, though not old, had her noſe ſaddled with a pair of ſpectacles almoſt as big as the tops of the cups ſhe pretended to inſpect: ſhe was placed between the two ladies, who ſeemed to treat her with the greateſt marks of freedom and civility.

Lyſetta, I found, had been ſo complaiſant to her friend as to let her be firſt ſerved: but it was now her own turn; and freſh cups being brought, and the coffee-oracle having judiciouſly poured the quantity of a tea-ſpconful into each, the lady took it into her hand, threw out the liquor, whelmed it on the cloth, and turned it round three times. All being concluded, the propheteſs took up the firſt with the moſt ſolemn air, looked ſtedfaſtly into it, then on Lyſetta; and, after having repeated this ſeveral times, at laſt delivered her predictions in theſe terms—

Fortune-teller. I ſee a ring, Madam; your ladyſhip will be married.

Lyſetta. 'Tis rather a mourning-ring; ſome of my kindred or friends, perhaps, may die.

Fortune-teller. I can ſay nothing to that, Madam, as yet: but I am poſitive here is a wedding-ring, a heart juſt by it; and a little farther there is a great houſe, with a high wall, and a pair of gates. Your ladyſhip will have ſome gentleman that has a fine ſeat in the country—it looks almoſt like a caſtle.

Lyſetta. I know nothing of it. But what elſe do you ſee?

Fortune-teller. Here is a man, Madam, that ſeems to bring you money. Here are papers, too; I do not know but they may be bills.

Lyſetta. Very likely; for I expect my banker here either to-day or to-morrow.

Fortune-teller. Then here is a bundle of ſomething brought to your ladyſhip's houſe.

Lyſetta. Oh, that is a new ſack I have making. But is there nothing more?

Fortune-teller. Not in this cup, Madam: but I will look into the next.

Lyſetta. Do; for you have told me nothing of any conſequence.

Fortune-teller. There is a great deal here, Madam, I can perceive already. Here is a gentleman ſitting in an eaſy chair, leaning his elbow upon the table and ſeems to be in a deep ſtudy.

Lyſetta. Piſh! what's this to me?

Fortune-teller. Yes, Madam, it is a great deal to you; for here is your ladyſhip, and the very ſame gentleman on his knees before you. You turn your head away, and look a little ſcornful; but he has you by the hand. Bleſs me! here you are both together again; he is talking very earneſtly to you. I never ſaw any thing ſo plain; your ladyſhip may ſee it yourſelf.

In ſpeaking theſe laſt words, ſhe held the cup to Lyſetta, and with a pin pointed out the eyes, the noſe, and mouth, of the pretended figure; but Lyſetta puſhed it from her, and ſaid—

Lyſetta. I could never ſee any thing in a cup in my life. But what ſort of a man is he?

Fortune-teller. Pretty tall, Madam; well ſhaped; very genteel; has a fair complexion, and ſomewhat of a languiſhment in his eyes.

Lyſetta. I cannot recollect that I know any man who anſwers this deſcription.

Fortune-teller. I ſcarce think you do, Madam, at preſent; but your ladyſhip may take my word for it, that you will ſee and be courted by ſuch a one; for here is a figure of three over his head: it muſt be either in three days, or three weeks, at fartheſt. Let me conſider——aye, the moon was at the full yeſterday—this event muſt happen before ſhe enters into her next quarter. But the next cup, it may be, will ſhew it more clearly.

With this ſhe took up the third cup; and had no ſooner looked into it, than ſhe ſet it down again, clapped her hands together, and cried out—

Fortune teller. Bleſs me! now I am poſitive your ladyſhip will very ſoon be married! Here is an altar, a book upon it,

it, and a parſon; all as exact as if they were drawn by a pencil.

She then took up the cup again; and perceiving Lyſetta began to look a little more ſerious than ſhe had done, went on in this manner—

Fortune-teller. Well, this is wonderful, indeed! Of all the cups I ever turned in my life, I never ſaw any thing like this! Here is your ladyſhip hand in hand with that ſaid gentleman who I told you was in the other. I would now ſwear that your ladyſhip will be a wife before any one imagines you have any thoughts that way.

Lyſetta. I have a very good opinion of your ſkill, yet am certain you are miſtaken in this prediction; for, to tell you the truth, I am reſolved never to marry.

Fortune-teller. Your ladyſhip may reſolve what you pleaſe; but if the ſtars reſolve the contrary, all your reſolutions will come to nothing. Madam, there is no reſiſting fate: this gentleman is ordained to be your huſband; and, how much ſoever you may ſet yourſelf againſt it, the decrees of deſtiny are inevitable, and you muſt ſubmit.

Lyſetta. Oh, Heavens! whether I will or not!

Fortune-teller. Undoubtedly, Madam. There is no withſtanding the ſuperior powers; and thoſe things which we think the fartheſt removed from us, are frequently the moſt near at hand; ſo that deſign what you will, reſolve what you will, it is all in vain; your ladyſhip is ordained to be a wife, and the gentleman I ſee in theſe cups muſt be your huſband.

Lyſetta. Well, if ſuch a thing ſhould come to paſs, ſhall I be happy?

Fortune-teller. There is nothing in the cup, Madam, that ſhews the contrary.

The cups having been all examined, the propheteſs, after receiving a handſome gratuity for her trouble, took her leave, and left Lyſetta and her fair companion to reaſon between themſelves on the wonders of her art. But my Chryſtalline Remembrancer being now quite full, it is not in my power to relate the particulars of their diſcourſe; and can only ſay, that they both ſeemed to give an implicit credit to every thing ſhe had pretended to reveal.

CHAP. III.

PRESENTS THE READER WITH A VERY FOOLISH ADVENTURE OF LYSETTA'S, TO WHICH ALL THAT WAS CONTAINED IN THE PRECEDING CHAPTER WAS ONLY A PRELUDE.

HAVING diſcovered this folly in Lyſetta, which before I could never have imagined, I began now to be cenſorious enough to ſuſpect ſhe might alſo be guilty of others, and therefore took it into my head to make her ſome Inviſible Viſits, at thoſe hours in which it was likely her behaviour was moſt unguarded. In order to ſatisfy my curioſity, I went one morning, and found her buſy in looking over ſome new pamphlets, juſt ſent her by her bookſeller. As I always thought the moſt certain way to form a true judgment of a woman's mind was in knowing what ſort of reading ſhe moſt delighted in, I was glad to perceive that this lady made choice of only ſuch books as ſhewed her neither a wanton nor a coquette, and returned all thoſe which, by their titles, diſcovered the leaſt tendency to prophaneneſs or obſcenity. After this, ſhe began to open the leaves of one of them; but before ſhe had gone through half the leaves it contained, was interrupted by her footman, who brought her a letter, and ſaid the perſon waited for an anſwer. I ſlipped behind her chair while ſhe broke the ſeal, and the contents were as follow—

'TO THE HONOURABLE LYSETTA.

'MAY IT PLEASE YOUR LADYSHIP,
'MADAM,

'I Hope your goodneſs will pardon the liberty a ſtranger takes in 'writing to you; but as I am not ſo 'fortunate to be acquainted with any 'perſon who can introduce me to your 'ladyſhip, I am obliged to become my 'own ſolicitor, and moſt humbly re'queſt you will allow me the privilege 'of waiting on you this afternoon, if no 'previous engagement intervenes be'tween me and my deſires; having 'ſomething to communicate of the ut'moſt

'moſt moment to the peace of him who 'has the honour to be, with the moſt 'profound reſpect, your ladyſhip's ſin-'cerely devoted ſervant,

'ORSAMES.'

Lyſetta ſeemed a good deal confounded on reading this little epiſtle; and after pauſing a while, argued with herſelf in this manner—'Good God! if 'this ſhould be the man the fortune-'teller told me of! ſhe ſaid I ſhould 'hear or ſee ſomething of him within 'three days, and this is but the ſecond 'ſince the prediction. If I was ſure he 'was the perſon ſhe mentioned, I think 'I ought not to give him leave to viſit 'me, at leaſt not on his firſt requeſting 'it; yet I ſhould be glad, methinks, to 'ſee if he any way anſwers the deſcrip-'tion ſhe gave of him: beſides, if I 'ſhould refuſe him, ſome accident or 'another would bring us together; for 'it is certain, there is no ſuch thing as 'diſappointing fate. Why, therefore, 'ſhould I keep myſelf in ſuſpence? No, 'I will ſee him, and hear what he has 'to ſay. It may be he may come upon 'ſome other buſineſs than what I ima-'gine, and then it would be vaſtly ſilly 'in me to avoid him. Whoever he is, 'or whatever his deſigns are, it can be 'of no prejudice to ſee him once. He 'cannot run away with me, cannot have 'me againſt my will.'

She then called her ſervant, and bid him ſay that ſhe ſhould be at home. The fellow ran down, but had ſcarce time to deliver the meſſage he was charged with, before ſhe repented of it, as may be ſeen by this exclamation: 'Lord! 'what have I done! if he is really the 'perſon I take him to be, he muſt think 'me ſtrangely forward in ſo eaſily grant-'ing him admittance.'

While ſhe was ſpeaking this, ſhe ran to the ſtair-caſe with an intent to retract what ſhe had ſaid; but a ſecond thought witholding her, ſhe turned back into the room, and cried out—'What a fool 'I am! he does not know that I have 'conſulted a fortune-teller, nor that I 'have any reaſon to gueſs at the buſi-'neſs that brings him hither. Why, 'therefore, ſhould I ſhun him? What 'ſhame can my ſeeing him reflect upon 'me? It will be time enough to forbid 'his viſits when he has declared him-'ſelf my lover.'

How long ſhe would have continued in that mind is uncertain. Two ladies came in that inſtant to deſire her company with them to the Park, being a fine morning; to which ſhe conſenting, I left them, and went home, but with a full reſolution to return in the afternoon, and ſee what event the expected interview would produce. Accordingly I put on my Belt of Inviſibility, and went to the houſe of Lyſetta. I ſaw a chair waiting, but the door was ſhut, and I was obliged to ſtay in the ſtreet a conſiderable time, before it was opened for any perſon, either to go in or out. I got entrance at laſt, and paſſed directly to the dining-room, where I found the perſon I was deſirous of beholding. On my looking earneſtly on him, I ſaw he had ſo much the reſemblance of the picture drawn for him by the fortune-teller, that I preſently perceived ſhe muſt be better acquainted with his features than the cups could make her, and that in reality ſhe was a marriage-broker, under the diſguiſe of a coffee-grounds calculator. He had placed himſelf very cloſe to Lyſetta on a ſettee, and muſt have been making a declaration of love to her, by the anſwer ſhe gave juſt as I came into the room.

Lyſetta. Sir, it does not become me to hearken to any profeſſions of this nature, from a perſon, to whoſe family, fortune, and character, I am ſo entire a ſtranger.

Orſames. It will be eaſy for me, Madam, to give you full ſatisfaction in all theſe particulars; but till I can do ſo, I beg you will permit me, at leaſt, to convince you of my paſſion.

Lyſetta. Though, Sir, there is no room to doubt, either by your appearance or behaviour, that you are a gentleman and a man of honour, yet I ſhould be glad, methinks, to know ſome one perſon with whom you are acquainted.

Orſames. Unfortunately for me, Madam, there is not a ſoul in this town who can give any account of me. This, perhaps, you will think odd; but permit me to give a ſhort ſketch of my hiſtory, and you will ceaſe to wonder at it.

Lyſetta. Then, pray Sir, oblige me ſo far.

Orſames. It is no boaſt in me, Madam, to aſſure your ladyſhip, that my family is among the number of the moſt ancient in England, having been ſettled here long before the Conqueſt, and many

of them been bishops, judges, and privy-counsellors; but my father, taking some disgust at the measures in a late reign, resolved to quit his native country for ever; and to that end sold the seat of his ancestors, with a very considerable estate in Somersetshire, and carried the purchase-money, together with his whole family, to Philadelphia, where he had then a brother, reputed the most wealthy merchant in that place. It was there, Madam, I was born, and am the only surviving issue of my parents, and consequently the sole heir of their possessions, as also of my uncle's, he dying without leaving any child behind him. I fear I tire you, Madam.

Lysetta. No, Sir, I beg you will go on.

Orsames. From my very infancy there was somewhat in my nature which could not relish the manners of these Americans, though born among them. I had read a great deal, and heard much concerning England, and had always a passionate desire to come to it; but my father, even after my arriving at maturity, would never listen to any intreaties on that score. After his death, my uncle was no less averse to my removal; but on his demise, finding myself freed from all dependency, and entirely master of my own actions, I left all my effects to be disposed of by a person whose integrity I am well assured of, and taking with me only a thousand guineas, just for present use, embarked in the first ship that sailed for England, where I happily arrived about six weeks since.

Lysetta. But would it not have been better, Sir, that you had staid at Philadelphia till your affairs had been settled?

Orsames. Not at all, Madam; I have friends there that will manage for me as well as if I were there in person. Besides, an irresistible impulse hurried me to England. I could not then account for my impatience, but am now convinced it was my guardian angel called me to behold in reality that lovely face I have so often seen in dreams.

Lysetta. What! dream of me!

Orsames. Yes, Madam, though so many leagues distant, my spirit has been often with you, conversed with you, and avowed that flame my mortal part now feels.

Lysetta. Is it possible!

Orsames. True, by Heaven!

Lysetta. And are you certain I am the same you saw in your sleep?

Orsames. I could not be deceived; the first moment my eyes were blest with your presence at the Chapel Royal, I forgot the solemnity of the place, and the pious business that had brought me thither.

Lysetta. 'Tis very wonderful; but 'tis time enough to talk of these things. As you have related to me the former part of your life, I should like to know in what manner you intend to regulate the future.

Orsames. That must be submitted to my charming directress; all my affairs, as well as my heart, must henceforth be at your disposal. I had thoughts, indeed, of purchasing a small estate, of about fifteen hundred or two thousand pounds a year; but whether I should put the remainder of my fortune into the publick funds, or lay it out on an employment at court, I had not yet determined.

Lysetta. Oh, by all means buy a place; the court is the only thing upon earth.

Orsames. Next to your company I believe it is; and since you approve the thought, shall infallibly pursue it.

Lysetta. Whoever you marry, Sir, will doubtless be of my opinion.

Orsames. Ah! do not wrong my faithful heart so much as to imagine it capable of being charmed by any other. No, if all my love, my services, my prayers, should fail to move the adorable Lysetta, I vow an eternal celibacy.

Lysetta. You men always talk thus when you would impose on the credulity of our sex; but, Sir, it is time alone that is the true touch-stone of sincerity.

Orsames. Madam, it is, and to that I shall trust the decision of my fate; therefore, I once more implore your permission to repeat my vows, and pay you the tribute which beauty like yours demands from love like mine.

Lysetta. I will not hear so much of love; but, as you are a stranger in town, and as yet have no acquaintance, I cannot be so ungenteel to refuse you the privilege of visiting me sometimes.

At these words, he threw himself upon his knees; and, catching hold of both her hands, pressed first the one and then the other to his lips, with the greatest appearance of transport; all which she suffered,

suffered, nor discovered the least reluctance. I know not how long he might have continued in this mute courtship, if the sound of somebody at the door had not obliged him suddenly to rise. It was Lysetta's servant, who immediately entered, and presented her with two letters, which had been just left her by the post. She looked on the superscriptions, then threw them carelessly on the table, without shewing any impatience to examine the contents; but her lover, either through politeness, or because he had acted enough of his part for the first time, thought proper to take his leave, saying, he would do himself the honour to wait on her the next day.

He was no sooner gone, than she began to give a loose to those agitations his presence and discourse had occasioned, and which she had not without great difficulty restrained from being visible. It was in these terms she expressed herself, which, incoherent as they are, I shall deliver them to my readers, just as I found them the next morning engraved on my Tablets. 'Well, this is the 'oddest accident; sure there was never 'any thing so astonishing! Let people 'say what they will, there is a great 'deal in the throwing of a cup; that 'woman is certainly the devil; how 'exactly she described this gentleman! 'I have said I would never marry, but 'if the stars have ordained it otherwise, 'it is in vain to resist; and if his fortune be such as he pretends it is, I can 'see no cause for any one to blame me.'

Here she stopped, and fell into a little reverie; but soon coming out of it, thus renewed her ejaculations: 'There is nothing in the person nor address of this 'new lover but what is perfectly agreeable; and I believe I shall like him 'well enough on a little more acquaintance with him; he seems vastly charmed with me; but one ought not to 'build on what the men say on these 'occasions. There is something strangely particular, indeed, in his dreaming 'of me without ever having seen me: 'in fine, the more I consider, the more 'I find the hand of fate is in this business, and I must submit.'

After this, she seemed somewhat more composed, and began to read the letters she had received. I also looked over them at the same time; but found they were only from relations, of family affairs of no moment to the publick, or to the narrative I am reciting. When I came home, had thrown myself into an easy-chair, and began to ruminate on the extraordinary scene I had been witness of, I knew not whether the base design, which I now plainly perceived had been concerted between the fortune-teller and Orsames, or the weakness and infatuation of Lysetta in giving credit to their romantick lyes, had the most right to engross my amazement. But when I reflected more deeply on the various impositions I daily saw practised, my wonder ceased, on account either of the fortune-teller or the fortune-hunter, and fixed itself entirely on the simplicity of Lysetta. It now seemed not strange to me, that the most illiterate and abject wretches should be endowed with a natural store of cunning, which, backed by impudence, renders them capable of forming contrivances to deceive; else how do we often see pick-pockets and house-breakers circumvent the watchfulness of the most cautious? But then, those sort of pilferers rob us when our heads are turned another way, or when we are sleeping in our beds; but in listening to fortune-tellers, we are defrauded with our eyes open, and give, as it were, our own consent to the worst kind of theft, that of stealing away our understanding.

People guilty of this egregious folly, when detected in it, pretend they consult those ridiculous oracles for no other end than merely to divert themselves, without believing, or even remembering one syllable of the predictions delivered to them. This may, perhaps, at first be true; but there are too many instances which prove, that custom, by degrees, turns into earnest what might once be meant as a jest. The reason is this: those subtle creatures frequently find means, either by emissaries, or by insinuating themselves among servants, to get into the secrets of families, and one real fact serving to make all they say believed, gives them the power to work the person who depends upon them almost to any point they aim at. The most pernicious designs have been carried on this way. Husbands have been set against their wives, and wives against their husbands; parents have been made to disregard their children, and children to forget all obedience to their parents; the best matches have been broke off, and the most disproportionable

tionable ones made: in fine, there is no kind of miſchief but what has happened when a fortune-teller has been bribed by ſome baſe perſon, who has an intereſt in bringing about ſuch events. Therefore, as there is a ſtrict law in force againſt theſe pretended dealers in futurity, I cannot help ſaying, that I regret it's not being executed with greater punctuality; ſince the more ſimple an evil appears, the more dangerous it proves in it's effects.

CHAP. IV.

CONTAINS THE CATASTROPHE OF AN AFFAIR, WHICH THE REPETITION OF OUGHT NOT TO GIVE OFFENCE TO ANY ONE, EXCEPT THE PERSON WHOSE RESENTMENT THE AUTHOR WILL NOT LOOK UPON AS A MISFORTUNE.

LYSETTA was ſo ſtrongly perſuaded in her mind, that it was her fate to marry Orſames, that ſhe made not the leaſt attempt to check the growing inclination ſhe had for him, but rather thought it a virtue in her to encourage the moſt tender ſentiments for a perſon ordained by Heaven to be her huſband. I made ſeveral viſits to her, both in my viſible and inviſible capacity, and ſeldom went without finding Orſames there, and every time more free and *degagée* than before. He made ſo ſwift a progreſs in his courtſhip, that in leſs than a month he became the major domo of her family, commanded all the ſervants, and behaved as if already their maſter. To add to all this, Lyſetta ſuffered him to conduct her to all publick places, ſat in the ſame box at the playhouſe, and always dined and ſupped with her, whatever company were there: in a word, they were never aſunder but in thoſe hours when decency obliged them to be ſo.

So ſtrange a revolution in the behaviour of Lyſetta, made a great noiſe in the town; all her acquaintance were ſurprized; all her friends and kindred were much alarmed at it; eſpecially as the perſon to whom ſhe ſhewed theſe extraordinary favours was altogether unknown, nor could they get the leaſt account of him. Thoſe, who either through a long converſation or affinity of blood, could take the privilege of diſcourſing with her on this head, did it in a very free manner; but the anſwers ſhe gave to their interrogatories were far from being ſatisfactory. When ſhe told them his hiſtory as he had related it, they treated it with contempt. Some ſaid that he was an impoſtor; others, more modeſt, that they wiſhed he was not ſo; to both which ſhe returned, that whatever he were, ſhe was certain it was her fate to marry him, and deſired they would give themſelves no pain on that occaſion. As ſhe was naturally of a haughty, obſtinate diſpoſition, it is highly probable, that the remonſtrances they took the liberty of making to her, rather ſtrengthened than abated her reſolution of giving herſelf to him. I was at her houſe one day, under cover of my Inviſible Belt, when I heard the following converſation between them—

Orſames. Condemn me not, my angel, for being ſometimes melancholy even in your preſence. Though you have promiſed to make me one day the happieſt of mankind, and I look upon every word of that dear mouth as unfailing as an oracle, yet when I conſider the length of time between me and the conſummation of my wiſhes, the impatience of my paſſion will not permit me to be gay.

Lyſetta. You men are always in ſuch a hurry in every thing you do.

Orſames. Ah, Madam, 'tis a dreadful thing to have one's happineſs depend on the uncertain winds and waves; it may be yet two months before my effects can arrive from Philadelphia.

Lyſetta. And do you call that ſo long a time?

Orſames. A million of ages in the account of love, and even, according to common calculation, longer than human nature can ſuſtain continual torments; eight whole weeks, ſix and fifty anxious days, and as many reſtleſs nights; upwards of thirteen hundred hours of tedious expectation; and minutes almoſt numberleſs, waſted in pain which might be paſſed in pleaſure, if you would ſhorten the tremendous date.

Lyſetta. What would you have me do?

Orſames. Ah! if you loved, you need not be told, but of yourſelf generouſly bring the bleſſed event nearer to my wiſhes.

Lyſetta. You would not have me marry

marry till your affairs are settled, and things can be done to our mutual satisfaction.

Orsames. I understand you, Madam; the articles of jointure and pin money, I know, are customary in modish marriages; but the passion you have inspired me with is of too sublime a nature to stoop to such mean forms. I ask not what your fortune is, but will settle the whole of mine upon you; your lovely person is all the treasure I am ambitious of preserving; the rest shall be at your dispossal.

Lysetta. That is kind, indeed; but more than I desire or would accept of.

Orsames. Oh! that you had no other fortune than your beauty! then would the sincerity of my love be proved by endowing you with all that Heaven has made me master of. Alas! you know not how ardently, how faithfully I adore you.

Lysetta. Yes, I am vain enough to think I have some share in your affections.

Orsames. Some share! Oh! could you be sensible of the thousandth part of what I feel, pity, if not love, would compel you to ease my throbbing heart of the suspence it labours under, and you would give yourself to my burning, bleeding passion.

Lysetta. I have already said I will be yours, and now again repeat it.

Orsames. But when, my angel!

In speaking these words he threw himself upon his knees before her, burst into a flood of well-dissembled tears, and grasped her *robe de chambre* with agonies which I cannot but say had much the appearance of reality, while in these terms he prosecuted his design—

Orsames. I have till now supported life but in the rapturous hope of being one day blessed in your possession: but even hope, by it's uncertainty, becomes at last too weak an aid; and soon, very soon, my adorable Lysetta, will you behold your faithful lover a cold breathless corpse, unless the balm of your kindness recruits the vital lamp, and gives fresh vigour to my depressed and breaking heart.

Lysetta. I cannot bear to hear and see you thus. Rise, Sir; this posture does not become the man whom I intend to make my husband.

Orsames. No, by Heaven, I never will quit your feet without an assurance of my happiness. Say, then, oh say! when shall be the blissful day that makes you mine!

Lysetta. Since it must be so, even when you please.—No, hold, I had forgot myself.

Orsames. Oh, Heavens, what now?

Lysetta. I promised a clergyman, my near kinsman, that if ever I married, he should perform the ceremony; he is at present out of town, but will return next Sunday, and on the Tuesday following it shall not be my fault if we do not attend him at the altar.

Orsames. Extatick sound! May I depend on the performance of this heavenly promise!

Lysetta. You may, and be entirely easy on that point; and take now my hand, as an earnest of my giving it you in a more solemn manner before a parson: henceforward I shall look upon myself as yours.

Orsames. Angel! goddess! Thus then let me seal the covenant on those charming lips that have pronounced it.

Lysetta. The covenant will not hold good in law without both parties interchangeably sign their assent.

She uttered these words with a most pleasing smile, and at the same time threw her arms about his neck, and returned the passionate salute she had received from him, adding this tender expression—'My dear, dear Orsames, I 'do not now blush to confess to you, 'that from the first moment you de- 'clared yourself my lover, my heart 'corresponded with your vows, and 'told me what would be the event.' He affected too much transport, on hearing her speak in this manner, to be able to make any other reply than kisses and embraces, which, as she was far from repelling, or seeming the least offended at, I know not what advantages he might have taken, on finding her thus softened by his artifices, if a sudden interruption had not, happily for her, broke off this dangerous entertainment. A footman came and told her that her aunt, lady Gravelove, was come to visit her; on which she cried out with some peevishness—'Pish! why did you not 'say I was from home?' Then turning fondly to Orsames, said—

Lysetta. Do you chuse to join company with my aunt? or shall I fetch some book to amuse you with till she is gone?

Orsames.

Orſames. No, my dearest love; this lady has always looked upon me with an unpleasing eye, especially of late, therefore will not offend her with my presence; neither are my spirits enough composed, in the excess of joy you have inspired me with, to read any thing with attention; so will take a little walk.

Lyſitta. Do so; but I shall expect you back to supper: my aunt seldom stays longer than to drink tea, and I am sure I shall not press her at this time.

No more was said on either side; they embraced and parted; she went into the next room, and he down stairs, in order to go where his business or inclination called him. As I never believed this fellow was what he pretended, I had taken some pains to discover the truth of his circumstances, but without any success, till it now came into my mind to follow him, after he had left Lysetta's house; which I did, resolving not to lose sight of him till he should return to her again.

He went directly to Drury Lane, walked very fast, and never stopped till he came to the entrance of a narrow passage between that place and Wild Street, where he stood still, and looked round him, I suppose, to see if any one was near who might know him; for day was not yet quite shut in: then passed a little farther, looked about him again, and finding the coast, as he thought, clear, none being in the alley but his Invisible Attendant, slipped hastily into a little dirty alehouse, where an old woman met him, and told him his friends were all above; on which he ran up stairs, and pushed open the door of a room, pretty spacious indeed, but had otherwise all the signs of beggary and wretchedness about it. Here we found five or six men tolerably well habited, but had something in their countenances which made me guess their occupation before they discovered it by their conversation; for they were no better than a gang of thieves and sharpers: they were sitting round a table, with a great bowl of punch before them, when Orsames rushed in, and, with a gay air, accosted them in these terms—

Orſames. Wish me joy, my lads, my hearts of steel, wish me joy; I have gained my point; all is over, i'faith.

Firſt Man. What, married!

Orſames. No, but as good as married; the wench and her twelve thousand pounds are as sure to me, as if I had the one in my arms, and the other in my pocket. Tuesday is the day, my buffs! But I must have more money, by G—d! I have not a single doit left.

Second Man. How! all the fifty pieces gone already!

Orſames. Ay, faith, and well laid out too; I shall return it with interest; you are all to share in the money, and the woman too. But come, how stands stock among you?

Third Man. Curse low: though we have been all out to-day, we have not collected above thirty pieces, and four gold watches that must be knocked to pieces, and the cases melted down, or the makers names may betray us.

Fourth Man. The road grows worse and worse every day, I think.

Orſames. But did you get nothing from the ladies the fortune-teller told you were to take the air this morning on Barnes Common?

Fifth Man. I should have done; but, as the devil would have it, just as they were going to pull out their purses, three gentlemen, with fire-arms, came galloping towards us, and obliged me to make off without my booty.

Orſames. 'Twas damn'd unlucky!

Firſt Man. One meets with a thousand disappointments; for my part, I am half sick of the business, and so I believe we are all.

Second Man. Ay, faith; for, what with feeing inn-keepers, coachmen, fortune-tellers, and other such necessary informers, we have the least part of the profit to ourselves.

Third Man. Ay, I wish, Orsames, you were once married, that you might set up a gaming-table under the sanction of your lady's name. Gaming is ten times a more profitable, as well as a safer way of thieving.

Orſames. You know it was my bargain, and you may depend upon my honour, that it shall be the first thing I will do.

Fourth Man. It will be a joyful day; for, since taxes have been so high, and trade so low, such numbers of shopkeepers are obliged to take the road, that we old practitioners can scarce get a living by it.

Orſames. Well, well, all this will be over

over in a short time: but you must raise me some cash; I can easily give you an account of the fifty pieces.

Fifth Man. No, no, it needs not; we know you would not sink upon us.

Orsames. I chuse, however, to do it. The first article is five guineas to the fortune-teller, as an earnest of the hundred she is to receive after my marriage with Lysetta. The second, is twenty pounds for a gold snuff-box, which I pretended to have brought from Philadelphia, and presented to her ladyship. The third, is about ten more, spent in three several jaunts I made with her to Richmond, Windsor, and Greenwich. The remainder, you may believe, might well be spent in donations to her servants, board-wages to my own man, paying my lodgings at two guineas a week, chair-hire, and other necessary expences.

First Man. You could do no less.

Second Man. Ay, ay, nothing of all this could have been spared. But what sum do you demand at present?

Orsames. I believe twenty pieces will defray the whole charges of the wedding, which is all I want; afterwards, my boys, I shall have enough for you all.

On this, every one turned out his pockets, and the sum was immediately made up, and laid upon the table; which Orsames put into his purse: and then some discourse ensued among this vicious company, which I chuse to pass over in silence, as it would be no fit entertainment for the chaste ears of my fair readers. Orsames staid with them about two hours, and then took his leave in order to sup with Lysetta, as she had desired he would. I accompanied him not thither, but went home to my own apartment, more full of confusion at the discovery I had made than I am able to express. Though I half despised Lysetta for the follies I had seen her guilty of; yet, when I reflected on her birth, and the character she had maintained in the world, I could not bear the thoughts of her becoming the victim of the base design concerted against her; and her fortune, reputation, and eternal peace of mind, the prey of such a nest of villains.

My whole study was now fully bent to snatch this unfortunate lady from that gulph of perdition she was upon the brink of, and so near plunging into. I was extremely divided in my thoughts what to do upon this occasion. To give her any hints concerning the dangers to which she exposed herself and reputation, by encouraging the addresses of a man whose character she was so little acquainted with, I knew would be in vain, as she had rejected all the warnings given her on that score, and refused to listen to the admonitions of her best friends and nearest kindred. I had it in my power, indeed, to inform her of much more than any of them could even guess at: but then I could not relate the scene I had been witness of, without discovering, at the same time, the secret of my Invisible Belt; which was by no means proper for me to entrust her with.

To acquaint her by letter with what I knew concerning Orsames, and the villainous conspiracy which had been formed to ruin her, I feared would be to as little purpose; and doubted not but she would look upon an anonymous intimation only as a piece of malice, and treat it with the contempt it might seem to merit. As this, however, was the only method I could take to save her, with any convenience to myself, I resolved to pursue it; and accordingly wrote to her next morning a full account of all I had been witness of between Orsames and his wicked companions. I made this letter be left at her house before the time in which she usually got out of bed, to the end she might have leisure to consider the contents, without being interrupted by any company coming in. As I was desirous of seeing in what manner she would receive this intelligence, I went, under cover of my Belt, and gained entrance just as she had finished the perusal.

Her behaviour was such as I apprehended it would be. She tore the letter, stormed, and cried out—'Was there 'ever so much impudence! Sure the 'person who sent this infamous scrawl 'must have a very mean opinion of my 'understanding, to think I could give 'the least credit to such a vile aspersion!—Orsames an impostor! a companion for thieves and vagabonds!—'ridiculous!' And then again—'This 'must certainly be a contrivance of some 'of my wife kindred to break off the 'match. I could find in my heart to 'send for Orsames, and marry him 'this instant, to shew how much I despise their little malice. But 'tis no 'matter; Tuesday will soon arrive, and 'that will put an end to all.'

I staid

I ſtaid a full hour, in the ſuppoſition that Orſames would make her a morning viſit; but finding, by ſome diſcourſe ſhe had with her maid, that ſhe did not expect him, and was making herſelf ready to go among the ſhops for things ſhe wanted, I quitted her apartment, much diſconcerted at the ill ſucceſs of what I had done. However, as I had little elſe to employ my time that day, I went again in the afternoon. Orſames was now there, and two ladies of Lyſetta's particular acquaintance. Whether ſhe had mentioned any thing to him of the letter, I cannot be certain; but am apt to think ſhe had not; for he appeared with an alertneſs which, by all I could diſcover, had nothing of conſtraint in it. Cards were called for; and they were juſt going to ſit down to whiſt, when word was brought to Lyſetta, that her couſin, Captain Platoon, was juſt arrived from Carliſle, and come to wait upon her; on which ſhe ordered him to be ſhewed up immediately. Orſames, who I perceived had turned pale as aſhes on hearing this gentleman's name, now roſe haſtily from his chair, and ſaid to Lyſetta—'I have juſt thought of ſome buſineſs 'I had to diſpatch—your ladyſhip muſt 'excuſe me—the affair that calls me is 'of conſequence—I cannot ſtay.'

She was going to make ſome reply, but the captain came that inſtant into the room. While he was paying his compliments to his couſin and the other ladies, Orſames had taken up his hat, and was endeavouring to ſlip out unperceived; but the quick-ſightedneſs of Lyſetta prevented him: ſhe ran to him, and catching hold of his ſleeve, ſaid—'You ſhall not go; at leaſt till I have 'preſented you to my couſin.' Then turning to the captain, ſaid—'This is a 'gentleman, couſin, whoſe acquaint-'ance, I believe, you will hereafter 'think yourſelf happy in.'

On this the captain advanced, with great politeneſs, to embrace the perſon his kinſwoman preſented to him; but had no ſooner fixed his eyes upon his face, than he ſtarted back with the utmoſt aſtoniſhment, and cried out to Lyſetta—'What is the meaning of this, Ma-'dam? Who would you introduce to 'me?' She was opening her mouth to make ſome anſwer; but Orſames, who was drawing as faſt as he could towards the door, hindered her from ſpeaking, by ſaying, with a heſitating voice—'Madam, the gentleman does not ſeem 'to deſire any new acquaintance. I 'will wait on your ladyſhip another 'time.' In ſpeaking this, he got to the top of the ſtair-caſe; and, it is likely, would have made but one ſtep to the bottom, if the captain had not prevented him, by running to him, and catching faſt hold of him by the collar, dragged him back, ſaying, at the ſame time—'No, raſcal! you muſt not 'think to leave this place till you have 'confeſſed what devil gave you the im-'pudence to introduce yourſelf into ſuch 'company, and on what villainous de-'ſign you are thus diſguiſed in the ha-'bit of a gentleman.' Then addreſſing himſelf to Lyſetta, who ſtood as motionleſs as if transfixed with thunder, went on thus—'Madam, by what 'means ſoever this villain has impoſed 'on you, I do aſſure you, upon my ho-'nour, that two months ago he was a 'private man in Captain Cutcomb's 'company, and drummed out of the 'regiment for pig-ſtealing, and other 'miſdemeanors; for ſome of which, in-'deed, he ought to have been hanged.'

On theſe words Lyſetta ſcreamed out—'Oh, Heavens!' and fell into a ſwoon. The captain ſeeing this, quitted his priſoner, to run with the two ladies to her aſſiſtance; and Orſames took this opportunity of making his eſcape. Proper means being applied, ſhe ſoon recovered; and the ſwelling paſſions which had occaſioned this diſorder, vented themſelves in tears. The captain appeared a little impatient to know how ſhe became acquainted with ſuch a wretch as Orſames; but ſhe told him ſhe was not then in a condition to inform him of the particulars; ſaid ſhe was very ill, and muſt lie down, and deſired to ſee him another time: on which he took his leave, as did the two ladies; who knowing Orſames had profeſſed himſelf her lover, and the encouragement ſhe had given him, I could perceive ſmiled within themſelves at the diſcovery. Thus was Lyſetta preſerved from ruin; and had no other puniſhment for her folly, than being laughed at by thoſe who were privy to the affair. As for Orſames, I have ſince met him about town, in a very ſhabby and tattered condition. The gang of villains, his aſſociates, I believe, are diſperſed; and one of them has made his exit at Tyburn.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

TREATS ON VARIOUS MATTERS, SOME OF WHICH, THE AUTHOR DARES VENTURE TO ASSURE THE PUBLICK WILL HEREAFTER BE FOUND NOT ONLY MORE ENTERTAINING, BUT ALSO OF MORE CONSEQUENCE, THAN AT PRESENT THEY APPEAR TO BE.

I Had been told that Lady Playfield's route was an aſſemblage of the moſt brilliant and polite perſons of both ſexes; and though I never had any great opinion of this ſort of meetings, yet I was tempted to go thither, in order to be myſelf a witneſs how far the deſcription that had been given me was conſonant to truth. As I am an entire ſtranger to her ladyſhip, and did not care for the formality of being introduced by any one who went there, I choſe to make this viſit in my Inviſible capacity. The great number of wax tapers, the ſparkle of the ladies jewels, and the extraordinary beauty of ſome among them, was dazzling to my eyes at firſt entrance: but I ſoon found that I had the ſame fault to find with this, as I had done in all other mixed company I ever ſaw; a kind of hurry and confuſion, which deſtroys that ſolid converſation that is ſo agreeable when only a few ſelect friends are met together. It was near nine o'clock when I went thither, yet there were ſeveral who came in after me. Lady Playfield received all of them with her accuſtomed politeneſs; but, for a great while, there was nothing in the ſalutations, on either ſide, which engroſſed my attention ſo far, as to make me ſpread my Tablets to retain it.

I was, indeed, quite indolent to every thing that was ſaid, till the entrance of Lady Allmode gave a little ſpur to my curioſity. I had heard much talk of this lady, not only for her being extravagantly fond of every new faſhion, but alſo for a certain peculiarity in her manner of converſation, which made her admired by people of a low education, and as much laughed at by thoſe of a ſuperior. I had been told that ſhe had an utter averſion to plain Engliſh; and ſo thorough a contempt for what ſhe called the vulgar way of ſpeaking, that when ſhe talked, even on the moſt common things, ſhe interlarded all ſhe ſaid with the hardeſt words ſhe could pick out of the dictionary, and frequently coined new ones of her own, which never were, nor ſcarce ever will be, found in any vocabulary. Lady Playfield, I perceived, received her with a great deal of reſpect. I was then at ſome diſtance; but, on finding they were entering into converſation, drew more near, to have an opportunity of hearing, and improving myſelf, by a perſon of whom ſo extraordinary a deſcription had been given me. After the firſt compliments were over, Lady Playfield addreſſed herſelf to her in theſe terms—

Lady Playfield. Though I am always happy when I ſee your ladyſhip, yet now I can ſcarce forbear complaining of your unkindneſs in coming without Miſs Arabella. I hear ſhe has been in town above a week.

Lady Allmode. I could not have been guilty of ſo enormous a ſoleciſm in good breeding, as not to have brought her to pay her duty to your ladyſhip, if there had been a poſſibility in nature to have done it.

Lady Playfield. I hope Miſs is well, Madam.

Lady Allmode. Perfectly ſo, Madam, as to her health; but ſuch a ſight! ſuch a figure!—a greater metamorphoſis than any in Ovid.

Lady Playfield. What does your ladyſhip mean?

Lady Allmode. Oh, Madam, the remoteſt corner of the moſt deſart of the three Arabias never produced ſuch a creature; ſuch a Tramontane, as the Italians elegantly phraſe it. Well, theſe people who live a great way from London, are ſuch abſurdians, ſuch awkwardities! Would your ladyſhip believe it? they ſent the girl home in a cap that quite covered the drum of her ears.

Lady Playfield. That might be to prevent her catching cold in the coach.

Lady Allmode. Oh, Jupiter! how am I ſurprized to hear your ladyſhip talk in this manner!—But this is not all. The girl had ſeveral new ſuits of cloaths, when ſhe left London, made in the genteeleſt taſte: but my country aunt taking it into her head, that either I had allowed too ſcanty a pattern, or that ſhe had outgrown them, out of mere good-

will and simplicity, has lengthened all her petticoats to such a ridiculous size, that they almost come down to the buckles of her shoes; I protest one can scarce see whether she has any ancles.

On this a gentleman, who stood pretty near, approached Lady Allmode; and, with a most ironical tone, replied to what she had said in these words—

Gentleman. Your ladyship must excuse the mistake your aunt has made. I fancy the fashion of going half naked may not yet have reached so far as Wales.

Lady Allmode. You certainly speak the rationalii of the thing, Sir. Few of these mountaineers regard any thing but loading their tables with provisions, feasting their tenants, paying their debts, standing up for the liberties of their country, and such like antiquated obsolete customs. For my part, all my faculties are immerged in a profoundity of astonishment, to think that my aunt could marry and settle among such aliens to politeness, such heathens to the laws of good-breeding and the drawing-room.

Gentleman. Perhaps, Madam, the customs and manners you mention were in vogue at the time of your aunt's marriage?

Lady Allmode. I protest, Sir, you have hit upon the solution of this enigma. It was, indeed, in the reign of Queen Anne that she married.

I had seen enough of this fine lady, and did not chuse to have my Tablets crouded with any more of her unintelligible jargon; so retired to another part of the room, where I saw three ladies got together, who seemed very earnest in discourse. But little was I like to be the better for my near approach; for being on the topick of scandal, each was so full, and so highly delighted with the thoughts of it, that all speaking at the same time, prevented me from hearing distinctly what was said by any of them; and all I could gather, at last, was, that a certain lady of their acquaintance had been caught with her footman.

As I had been informed of the particulars of this story before, the foible of the transgressing fair did not so much engross my meditations, as the pleasure those of her own sex seemed to take in exposing it; and I could not help saying to myself, with the poet—

'There is a lust in man, no charm can
'tame,
'Of loudly publishing his neighbour's shame.
'On eagle's wings immortal scandals fly;
'While virtuous actions are but born, and
'die.'

But this was a place more proper to collect matter for reflection hereafter, than to indulge it at present; so I passed on among the gaming-tables, which were eleven in number, and none of them unoccupied. Here it was pleasant enough to observe the various attitudes of those who played: and I think there is not a more sure way of judging people's dispositions, than to see them at this diversion. Some of those who swept the stakes, received the favours Fortune bestowed on them with an ease and calmness which shewed they had not been over-anxious whether she smiled or frowned; but there were many more, who snatched up the glittering metal with a greediness which sufficiently demonstrated that avarice was the chief excitement to what they did. As for the losers, it gave me an infinite satisfaction to see the unconcerned behaviour of some few among them; while others, again, filled me with a no less sensible disquiet at their impatience. I was ashamed to find a gentleman of rank and fortune forget all politeness, and sometimes even common decency, to those who had his money in their pockets; and sorry in my heart to see a lady bite her lips, wrinkle her forehead with unbecoming frowns, distort every feature, and disfigure all the charms which nature had bestowed on her, for the loss of what was not worth half that anxiety to preserve. 'Good Heaven!' said I to myself, 'if this be the effect of gaming, 'what madness is it to venture one's 'peace in that uncertain gulph!'

The beautiful Ismena was this night among the number of the unfortunates, but not of the impatients. I stood behind her chair, and saw her empty a well-filled purse, and take out of it even the last guinea with a smile. She was, indeed, a young lady lately come to the possession of a very large fortune, and could not want what she had thrown away: but the same might also be said of Clarinda, who played at the same table with her, and had also lost a considerable sum to Sir Charles Fairlove, with whom these two ladies had been engaged

engaged the whole evening at picquet. But see the difference! the latter of them rose from the table in a fury, tore her fan, and cried—

Clarinda. Curse the cards!—I will play no more this night, that I am resolved; at least with Sir Charles.

Ismena. Nay, Madam, we have no reason to be angry with Sir Charles, for having done by us what we would gladly have done by him. For my part, though he has stripped me of all I had about me, I am as good friends with him as ever.

Sir Charles. I hope so, Madam; otherwise the good luck I have had at play would prove the greatest misfortune of my life.

Clarinda. The devil's in the cards to-night, I think! I never lost at picquet in my life before; and now I have thrown away——I cannot justly say how much, but I'll see.

She then turned to the table, and poured out of a purse what was remaining in it; and having counted the sum, went on in the same heat as before.

Clarinda. Yes, by Heaven I thought so!—No less than six and twenty pieces!

Sir Charles. I should be sorry, Madam, to give you any disquiet on the score of such a trifle; but I can do no more than offer you a chance for regaining all you have lost. If you please, I will stake the whole against five of yours.

Clarinda. I should lose that too, I suppose.

Ismena. Venture it, however. If you lose it, I'll be your halves, and send you the money to-morrow morning.

Clarinda. Well, then, I will make one more essay.

With these words, she sat down again. They played; she was the winner; and now appeared as gay and happy as she had lately been discontented. Sir Charles smiled, with some disdain, at this reverse in her humour; and, turning to Ismena, said—

Sir Charles. Now, Madam, you must take up the winner.

Ismena. She must give me credit, then, Sir. You both know I have no stake to lay down.

Clarinda. You must excuse me for that, Madam; it may turn my luck. Besides, one has no heart to play, when one does not see the money on the table.

Sir Charles. Well, then, beautiful Ismena, I will give you credit; or, if you please, will play upon the square, my honour against yours.

Ismena. With all my heart, Sir Charles.

The ill-nature, the ill-manners, and, indeed, the ingratitude of Clarinda, in refusing to give the credit of a stake at cards to a friend who had just before offered to pay half the losses she should sustain in playing with another, made that young lady as disagreeable in my eyes, as the sweetness of disposition and generosity of the sprightly Ismena made her charming to a much greater degree than ever she had appeared to me before; all lovely, as it must be confessed she is. But, to proceed. Ismena having accepted the challenge of Sir Charles, she tried once more what chance would do for her: chance was still against her, and Sir Charles again the conqueror. The game being over, she said, laughing—

Ismena. Well, I may now sing—'Fortune is my foe;' and content myself, for the remainder of the night, with being an humble spectator, since I am not in a condition to play myself.

Sir Charles. It will be your own fault, then, Madam, if you are. I believe I have an hundred and some odd pieces about me, which are all at your service.

Ismena. I thank you, Sir Charles; but I do not chuse to risque so much at one sitting. I do not care, however, if I become your debtor for twenty pieces.

Sir Charles. You do me a pleasure, Madam, in accepting any part of the offer I made you. There is the trifle you mention: if you want more, I beg you will command it.

Ismena. No, Sir, I am determined to play no farther than this. I am much obliged to you for the favour, and will return it to-morrow morning.

Sir Charles. There is no occasion, Madam. I have business your way to-morrow morning; and, if you permit me that honour, will wait on you about twelve.

Ismena. You may depend, Sir, on my being at home.

Clarinda, who had not opened her mouth all this time, no sooner saw her fair friend receive the money, than she laid her hand on hers, and, with a gay

air, said to her—'Now, my dear, I am 'ready for you, if you please; and 'willing to venture as much with you 'as you have borrowed of Sir Charles.' To this Ismena replied, with more seriousness than she was wont to put on—'No, 'Madam, I have been very unlucky here, 'and am resolved to change hands; I 'see Lady Longmore has given out at 'the whist table yonder, I'll go and take 'her place.'

With these words, she rose hastily from her seat, and did as she had said. Sir Charles followed her to the other table, and stood behind her chair till he saw her win more than the sum he had lent her. On the company's breaking up, she looked round the room for Sir Charles, in order, as I suppose, to return the money to him; but if she had any such design, he had taken care to prevent it, by leaving the place before she had done playing. This action of Sir Charles, joined to some amorous glances I had perceived him to regard her with, made me suspect he had some farther view than mere complaisance in what he had done; but as he was generally accounted a man of honour, and she had an unblemished character, I suspended my judgment till I should see the event of the visit she promised to receive from him the next morning.

After I had quitted this scene of gay confusion; as Mr. Addison elegantly expresses it, and had time to ruminate on the transactions that evening had presented me with; Sir Charles and Ismena ran very much in my head, but did not so totally engross my attention, as to make me negligent to all others. I had heard several of the assembly say to each other, that Miss Allmode was a most beautiful young creature, and would certainly be the reigning toast of the town, if not spoiled by the affectation of her mother; and this distinct description gave me a curiosity both to see the girl, and in what manner her self-sufficient ladyship behaved towards her. Accordingly I laid down a plan for my progression the next morning, which was this: to go to Lady Allmode's early, and from thence to Ismena at the time Sir Charles had appointed. I then began to remember that the night was far advanced, and went to bed, as it is probable some of my readers may find it necessary to do at this time.

CHAP. VI.

CONTAINS SUCH THINGS AS ARE NOT OFTEN TO BE MET WITH, NEITHER IN THE ONE NOR THE OTHER SEX; YET ARE, OR AT LEAST OUGHT TO BE, EQUALLY INTERESTING TO BOTH.

I Rose next morning more early than I had been accustomed to do, in order to prepare for my two visits; but, in spite of all the expedition I could practise, I found myself obliged to postpone either the one or the other till another day. So much time was elapsed, first in transcribing what I had seen at Lady Playfield's, and then in getting the dialogues engraved on my Tablets expunged, by the pure fingers of my yet unpolluted virgin; that, when all was ready, the clock wanted but few minutes of twelve. I hesitated not whether I should go to Lady Allmode's or to Ismena; for, being prepossessed in favour of the latter, I went thither in a lucky time. Sir Charles Fairlove was just stepping out of his chair: I followed him up stairs; and Ismena received him with great gaiety, accompanied with an equal air of modesty. As soon as they were seated, she said to him—

Ismena. Your money was very fortunate, Sir Charles: I did not lose one guinea after I became your borrower.

Sir Charles. Madam, I congratulate myself for being so happy to serve you, though on so insignificant an occasion; but should be better pleased to have it in my power to do so in much greater things.

Ismena. I doubt not of your generosity; and, if ever I am reduced to the same exigence again, it is likely may have recourse to the same hand. In the mean time, Sir Charles, let me return the favour you have already conferred upon me.

Sir Charles. This trifle, Madam, is neither worth your returning nor my receiving; nor should I have ever thought on it, if I had not given you credit on an infinitely more valuable account.

Ismena. Credit! As how, Sir Charles?

Sir Charles. Yes, Madam, a debt I am too impatient to wait long for the payment of, and am come to claim.

Ismena. You rally well, Sir Charles; but,

but, as I cannot comprehend the purport, am not prepared to give an anſwer.

Sir Charles. No, i'faith, Madam, you will find me extremely ſerious; ſure you cannot be ſo ſtrangely forgetful as not to recollect what you loſt to me laſt night at play?

Iſmena. I loſt nothing but what I paid, Sir Charles.

Sir Charles. Nothing, Madam?

Iſmena. No, upon my honour.

Sir Charles. You have named the very thing—your honour, Madam. When a lady ventures her honour at a gaming-table, and is ſo unlucky to loſe, ſhe muſt expect to pay the forfeit.

Iſmena. What do you mean, Sir Charles?

Sir Charles. My meaning needs no explanation, Madam; you loſt your honour to me, and I now demand the immediate poſſeſſion of what I fairly won.

Iſmena. Ridiculous!

Sir Charles. Madam, the contempt with which you treat my pretenſions will not take away the validity of them. What was once your honour, is now no longer ſo, but mine, and at my diſpoſal; and you would not, ſure, go about to defraud me of the good that Fortune has beſtowed upon me?

With theſe words, he threw his arms about her waiſt, with a freedom, which ſhewed he indeed looked upon her as his own: ſhe ſeemed a little alarmed at this action, and, ſtarting from him, endeavoured to repulſe the temerity he was guilty of, by ſaying to him—

Iſmena. Forbear; this fooling is offenſive.

Sir Charles. Madam, this coyneſs is trifling; I am ſurprized you will oblige me to have recourſe to force for what is ſo much my due, and I ſhould ſet a higher value upon it chearfully reſigned.

He then catched hold of her a ſecond time, and made an offer to bear her into another room: the graſp he had taken of her, was not ſo ſtrenuous, however, but that ſhe eaſily diſengaged herſelf; and, having done ſo, cried out with a voice and air full of the extremeſt diſdain—

Iſmena. Till this action, I ſcarce could think you were in earneſt. Baſe, preſuming man, how dare you entertain thoughts ſo unworthy of me!

Sir Charles. How dare you, Madam, hazard on the chance of a game at cards what ſeems ſo precious to you?

Iſmena. Oh, deſpicable! to turn that into a matter of ſerioufneſs which was only meant in jeſt!

Sir Charles. We men, Madam, take all the advantages we can, when we play with a fine woman; and you may be aſſured, I ſhall not eaſily be prevailed upon to relinquiſh thoſe I have gained over you.

Iſmena. The vain idea will little avail your vile purpoſe.

Sir Charles. You may be miſtaken, Madam: the laws of Weſtminſter Hall, indeed, will ſcarcely take any cognizance of an affair of this nature; but thoſe laws by which the polite world are governed, I mean the laws of gaming, will infallibly give it on my ſide. That pride of yours will be humbled, when you ſee your ſtake of honour become the publick jeſt, and all that has paſſed between us the ſubject of a news-paper.

Iſmena. I am confounded! You cannot certainly be the monſter you appear!

Sir Charles. I would not wiſh you, Madam, to put me to the proof.

Iſmena. Oh, Heavens! to what has one unguarded word expoſed me!

She could not utter this exclamation without letting fall ſome tears, which I perceived had a great effect on Sir Charles, by the change it occaſioned in his countenance: he affected, however, to take no notice of it, and reſuming his former boldneſs, went on—

Sir Charles. You ſee, Madam, how it is; you are entirely in my power; and, if I cannot have my agreement, I will have my revenge, or at leaſt an equivalent for both.

Iſmena. What equivalent!

Sir Charles. You muſt redeem your forfeited honour by a ſum of money.

Iſmena. Name it, then.

Sir Charles. Let me conſider, Madam—a woman's honour, as times now are, and beauty renders itſelf ſo cheap, will bear but a low price at the market; but, as you are well-born, well accompliſhed, are extremely handſome, and have more perfections than moſt of your ſex can boaſt of, I think five hundred pounds is the leaſt I can demand.

Iſmena. You ſhall have it, Sir.

With this, ſhe ran haſtily to a little cabinet that ſtood in the room, and having taken from thence what ſhe wanted, turned again to the table, ſaying—

Iſmena. Thoſe two Bank-bills, Sir, contain the ſum you mention; take them, and caſe me of your preſence.

Sir Charles. I muſt firſt examine, Madam,

Madam, if they are genuine: yes, they are right; and now, methinks, 'tis pity to rob you of so much money; five hundred pounds will purchase five hundred pretty trinkets, and I cannot receive it without feeling some concern.

Ismena. Oh, you need be under no concern on that score; were it five times the sum, I would gladly give it to be rid for ever, both of you and your impudent demand.

Sir Charles. Yet, in spite of all this severity, I shall willingly restore these bills on one condition.

Ismena. Sir, I shall make no conditions with you; therefore, be gone, and leave me.

Sir Charles. Not till you have heard me, Madam. The condition I would stipulate, is only this, that you will make a solemn promise never to play again, except for mere diversion, with some select friends, who you are certain will take no ungenerous advantage of you.

Ismena. There is little occasion for me to bind myself by a promise to avoid a thing which has already proved so mischievous: the insults I have received from you, will make me detest the sight of cards, and fly the society of all who pursue that dangerous amusement.

Sir Charles. It is enough; my ends are answered: and thus, on my knees, let me restore your bills, and with them, a heart which long has been devoted to you, and never harboured a wish to your dishonour.

Never had I known greater anxiety for any thing not relating to myself, or my particular friends, than I did for the issue of this conversation. I had been extremely scandalized at some part of Sir Charles's behaviour; yet, by many indications, could not set him down in my mind for the mercenary villain he affected to be; and was now as much rejoiced to see a likelihood of not having been deceived in my conjectures in his favour, as the reader will presently be convinced. Ismena, being too much amazed at this sudden turn to make an immediate reply, he went on thus, still kneeling—

Sir Charles. Oh, Ismena, forgive the seeming brutality I have been guilty of; I counterfeited the libertine, the villain, only to shew you there was a possibility for you to have met with such a one in reality; and assumed the most odious character, in order to render yours more truly amiable. The tender passion you inspired me with, has made me keep a watchful eye over all your actions. I found you perfect in every thing except a too great readiness to follow the example of others in the destructive love of play. I know the dangers to which your sex are exposed by it, and that there were many snares spread for your innocence in particular; by this means, even last night, there were some in company who wanted but the same opportunity I had to behave as I have done, though with far different views. Oh! pardon, therefore, the only stratagem I could think of to clear your mind of a propensity which might in time have sullied all it's brightness.

Ismena. Rise, Sir Charles; the diversity, I might say, indeed, the perplexity of my thoughts, hindered me, till now, from observing the posture you were in. Pray be seated, Sir. If I may give credit to your words, I am infinitely obliged to you for the care you took of my reputation, when you saw it so totally neglected by myself.

Sir Charles. No, Madam, say not so; I dare believe you never have failed in a due regard for your reputation, and am certain that the breath of slander has never presumed to blast it; and I could not mean to reproach you for any thing that has been, but to warn you against what might be. An immoderate inclination for gaming in your sex, I take to be the same as an immoderate inclination to drinking is in ours: both are equally intoxicating and destructive to right reason; they make the brain grow giddy, incapable of reflection, or any other pursuit than the darling folly; and they run headlong on, enveloped in a mist of errors, where fortune, fame, and peace of mind, are sometimes irrecoverably lost.

Ismena. Oh, Sir Charles, you have opened my eyes to see what my inadvertency might one day have plunged me in.

Sir Charles. I know very well, Madam, you wanted only to be reminded of the danger, to enable you to avoid it. The manner in which I have done so, may have, perhaps, appeared too presuming; but I feared more gentle methods might not have had the effect.

Ismena. Make no apologies, Sir Charles; I am now convinced you meant me well, and I thank you for it.

Sir Charles. If you accept it as a proof of friendship, it may in time engage

gage you to believe, that a ſincere and tender friendſhip in a perſon of my ſex to one of yours, deſerves a ſofter name, and call it love.

Iſmena. We will not cavil about names; but muſt acknowledge, Sir Charles, by what motive ſoever you have been actuated, the benefit is mine.

Sir Charles. How bleſs'd am I in this confeſſion! But, charming Iſmena, may I not be permitted to wait on you ſometimes, and have leave to hope the ſervices I ſhall hereafter pay will not be rejected?

Iſmena. I flatter myſelf with being able to regulate my future conduct, ſo as not to give you occaſion to offer any of that frightful ſort you have done this morning; and, if I ſhould relapſe into my former errors, could neither expect nor deſerve you ſhould take the ſame trouble for my reformation.

She ſpoke theſe words with ſo obliging a ſmile, that Sir Charles could not forbear teſtifying the tranſport he was in, by imprinting ſeveral paſſionate kiſſes on one of her hands; after which, looking on her with an equal mixture of tenderneſs and reſpect, he ſaid—

Sir Charles. Incomparable Iſmena! how impoſſible is it for me to expreſs either what you deſerve, or what I feel in a full ſenſibility of your perfections!

Iſmena. I deſire you will not go about to expreſs either the one or the other. The only merit I can boaſt of is, in being ſo early convinced of my fault; and that I am ſo, is wholly owing to yourſelf. For I confeſs to you, Sir Charles, that though it is but lately I have begun to like play at all, yet, by converſing with thoſe who ſeem to have no other way of paſſing their time, it grew by very ſwift degrees more pleaſing to me; and I believe that it would, in time, have become ſo habitual to me, that I ſhould have expected the hour of ſitting down to cards as naturally as that of ſitting down to dinner. But, in the mirror you have preſented to me, I now ſee, that to indulge this amuſement to an exceſs, is not only a folly below the dignity of a thinking mind, but alſo a kind of Scylla or Charybdis, formed by ourſelves in the ocean of life, as if on purpoſe to wreck our fortunes, honour, reputation, and every thing that is dear.

Sir Charles. Oh, Madam! every word you ſpeak on this occaſion thrills me to the very ſoul; I am charmed, I am raviſhed to find in you ſuch ſolid reaſon, ſuch an amazing quickneſs of apprehenſion.

Iſmena. You are relapſing into the panegyrick ſtrain; but I will hear no more of it. You muſt give me leave to play the monitor in my turn; I have been your convert, and you muſt now be mine. Remember, Sir Charles, that to liſten to the tongue of flattery, is no leſs pernicious than the folly you have taught me to be aſhamed of.

Sir Charles. I grant it, Madam; but the juſt praiſes of real virtue cannot cauſe a bluſh either in the face of the giver or receiver.

Iſmena. Well, I find you will have the better of the argument, whether the tenet you take upon you to maintain be right or wrong; therefore, to put an end to it, what think you of a turn or two in the Mall this morning?

Sir Charles. Madam, I ſhall be happy to attend you any where.

She then called for her capuchin and little muff; which being immediately brought, Sir Charles gave her his hand to lead her down ſtairs, and I retired to my apartment.

I had met with nothing a great while that gave me a more ſenſible ſatisfaction, than to find a lady, in all the pride of blooming youth, beautiful, gay, and ſurrounded with a crowd of flatterers, bear with ſo much chearfulneſs the conviction of her error, and teſtify ſo much gratitude to the perſon to whom ſhe was indebted for her reformation. The rough method he had taken for this purpoſe, was ſo far from raiſing any reſentment in her, after once knowing the motive, that ſhe looked upon him as her beſt friend, eſteemed, and loved him for it; conſcious that it required no leſs than ſuch a proceeding to rouze her from that thoughtleſſneſs which alone had made her fall into an error, the danger of which ſhe might otherwiſe have too late perceived.

I thought I had diſcovered ſomething in theſe two accompliſhed perſons, that ſeemed to me as if Heaven had ordained them for each other, and I ſoon found I had not been miſtaken. They are now married with the higheſt approbation of all friends on both ſides; and, in the opinion of as many as have the pleaſure of

of their acquaintance, bid fair to be one of the moſt happy pairs that ever entered into Hymen's bands.

CHAP. VII.

THE AUTHOR HAS BEEN IN SOME DEBATE WITHIN HIMSELF, WHETHER HE SHOULD INSERT OR NOT, AS HE IS CONSCIOUS IT WILL BE LITTLE RELISHED BY THE FASHIONABLE GENTEEL PART OF HIS READERS.

THERE is ſomething very unaccountable in an over-curious diſpoſition; it makes us eager, impatient, anxious, indefatigable, in prying into things which promiſe us not the leaſt pleaſure in the diſcovery of when known. A reader who has not this propenſity in his nature, will doubtleſs think, by what I ſaid of Lady Allmode in the fifth chapter, that I had already ſeen enough of her behaviour to keep me from being deſirous of ſeeing more. But as every one is willing to find ſome excuſe or other, even for the ſilliеſt things he can be guilty of, ſo I thought, that in being a ſpectator of Lady Allmode's conduct in her own family, and the manner in which ſhe trained up her daughter, ſomething might preſent itſelf to me that would more than compenſate for the time I ſhould expend in going to her houſe.

Accordingly I went, and gained an eaſy acceſs, the door happening to be open juſt as I reached it, to let out a footman in a gay livery, who had come to deliver ſome meſſage; but was a good deal bewildered on my entrance, as I had never been in the houſe before, and was entirely unacquainted with the ſituation of any of the rooms. The meaſure of time is always doubled when we wait for an event with impatience. I remained not long, however, in this dilemma: a ſervant running haſtily up the back ſtairs, with ſome drinking glaſſes on a ſilver waiter in his hand, I followed him into a room where a woman, by her appearance, I gueſſed was her ladyſhip's Abigail, received from him what he brought, and carried it into an inner chamber, the door of which ſhe ſhut after her, but not ſo ſuddenly as to prevent my entering with her.

Here I found Lady Allmode; but had ſhe appeared to me in any other place, ſhould never have known her for the ſame I had ſeen at Lady Playfield's route; ſo vaſt a difference is it in the power of art ſometimes to make. At the time of my coming in, ſhe was under the operation of having her eyebrows ſhaped with a ſmall pair of pincers, by one of thoſe perſons who go by the name of tyre-women; but, in my opinion, ought rather to be called face-menders, ſince their buſineſs is not ſo much to ornament the head as to rectify the defects of the features. The important work being over, Lady Allmode turned to a magnifier that ſtood upon her toilet, to ſee if all was right; and having looked into it, cried out haſtily—

Lady. Oh, Mrs. Prim, ſure your eyes are in eclipſe to-day! you have left no leſs than three exuberant hairs on my right brow, and I think arch'd it ſomewhat higher than the other.

Mrs. Prim. I beg pardon of your ladyſhip. but I will preſently remedy that error.

On this the artiſt employed her little inſtrument for a ſecond eſſay; after which Lady Allmode looked in the glaſs again, and ſaid—

Lady. It is very well now; but I look wretchedly to-day, and it is no wonder. What do you think, Mrs. Prim? That careleſs oaf there put me to bed laſt night without my ſpermaceti maſk.

Mrs. Prim. That was a great omiſſion, indeed, Madam; but your ladyſhip muſt forgive it, Mrs. Pinup does not uſe to neglect theſe things.

Pinup. I am very ſorry for it, Mrs. Prim; but it was ſo late when her ladyſhip went to bed, and her ladyſhip was ſo ſleepy.

Lady. And your foolſhip ſo ſleepy too, I ſuppoſe. But that is not all, Mrs. Prim; the creature threw it into ſome corner or other where Veni got at it, and this morning it was found half devoured.

Pinup. Your ladyſhip knows I have almoſt cried my eyes out about it, and that I offered to beſpeak another, and pay for it out of my own pocket.

Lady. Pay for it, ideot!—But tell me, creature, what atonement can'ſt thou ever make for theſe depredations on my countenance? Here I ſhall loſe a whole day; for 'tis impoſſible I can think of appearing in publick.

Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. Prim. I dare anſwer for Mrs. Pinup, that ſhe will never be guilty of the like fault again; therefore I beg your ladyſhip will forgive her.

Lady. Yes, yes, I have forgiven her, and I do forgive her; but ſhe muſt expect to be told of it ſometimes: if ſhe had lived with ſome ladies, they would have turned her out of doors that inſtant; *mais toujours les douceurs du cour* lay an embargo on my indignation.

Pinup. Your ladyſhip is all goodneſs.

Lady. Well, well, ſay no more about it; I am ſorry I ſtruck you; but take the Dreſden ſuit I had on yeſterday, and let me ſee you in it.

Pinup. I humbly thank your ladyſhip.

Lady. Say no more of it. Oh, *mon Dieu!* I begin to feel the effects of my diſconcertion; every membrane through my whole frame has a pulſation in it; give me ſomething to take this inſtant, or I ſhall faint. But as to the ſpermaceti maſk, is it not poſſible for you to get one ready for me before I ſleep, elſe my face will be a perfect nutmeg-grater by to-morrow morning?

Mrs. Prim. Oh, your ladyſhip need be under no apprehenſion on that ſcore, I always keep ſeveral; they want only ſprinkling with a little orange-flower water, to take off the ſcent; I will ſend your ladyſhip one this afternoon. Has your ladyſhip any farther commands?

Lady. Yes, you may ſend me a box of red for my cheeks; but do not let it be quite ſo high-coloured as the laſt.

Mrs. Prim. I ſhall take care to mix it ſo as to pleaſe your ladyſhip.—In ſpeaking this, ſhe made her exit with abundance of low curtſies.

Pinup was returning to her lady's chamber, but met her juſt coming out, in order to paſs into another room: on ſeeing her ſhe ſaid to her—

Lady. I think this girl takes a long time in dreſſing; go and ſee if ſhe is ready, and bid her come to me.

Finding now that there was ſome probability of my ſeeing the young lady, which had been, indeed, the chief motive of my going thither, I attended Lady Allmode where ſhe went, and placed myſelf in one corner of the room; where I did not wait above three or four minutes before Pinup, who had gone immediately on her errand, returned leading Miſs Allmode. She ſeemed to be about fourteen years of age; her face was extremely pretty, and I believe nature had given her a ſhape no leſs excellent, if it had not been deformed by her ſtay-maker. On her approach, Lady Allmode took her by the arm, turned her round ſeveral times, and examined her whole dreſs from head to foot; after which, looking very well pleaſed, ſhe ſaid—

Lady. Ay, Miſs, now you look like what you are; I proteſt, I ſcarce knew you for my own child, in the obſolete condition you came from the country. Are you not highly delighted with yourſelf?

Miſs. No, indeed, Madam; I think, ſince 'tis the faſhion to have one's cloaths made in this manner, there ought to be as many chimnies in a room as there are chairs.

Lady. Sure, Miſs, you are not cold?

Miſs. It would be very ſtrange, Madam, if I were not, when my ſtays are ſo contrived that the air comes down to the very bottom of my back, and below the pit of my ſtomach; and my petticoats ſo ſhort, that I am every minute fancying I have tucked them up in order to have my legs and feet waſhed; then as to my ears, I do declare I feel the wind blow from the one to the other, and pierces into my very brain.

Lady. O fye, Miſs; this being in the country has ſpoiled you. Whatever is the faſhion is never either too cold or too hot.

Miſs. I muſt beg your ladyſhip's pardon; for I am certain this faſhion is a great deal too much of both. The tightneſs of my ſleeves, the load of flounces at my elbow, and the huge ſemicircles, as heavy as panniers, hanging on each hip, make ſome parts of me ſweat, while all the reſt are freezing.

Lady. Oh hideous! Frightful!—Sweat! What a word is there from the mouth of a fine young lady! Whenever you have occaſion to complain of too much warmth, you ſhould always ſay, I perſpire. But I am ſurprized you ſhould not be charmed with ſo becoming a dreſs.

Miſs. I feel uneaſy, and quite uncomfortable, Madam.

Lady. A little uſe will reconcile you to it. Without vanity, Miſs, you are exceeding handſome; and now I have made you fit to appear in publick, the praiſes that will be given you, and the

fine things said to you, will raise such a *gaieté du coeur*, as will make you forget all that you call uncomfortable.

Miss. I should be glad, Madam, if any thing would do that.

Lady. You must learn to know yourself, Miss. Look in the glass; you have fine eyes, a very lovely mouth, a well-turned face, a delicate complexion, good hair; in fine, you are a compleat beauty. But what is beauty without the possessor understands how to manage it to advantage? A milk-maid may be a beauty, and no one take any notice of her. You must practise the art of displaying every charm, and rendering yourself conspicuous.

Miss. Indeed, Madam, I am quite ignorant of these things.

Lady. I perceive you are, Miss; but that is not your fault; my formal aunt has never given you any instructions in this point, I suppose: a few lessons, however, will soon put you in the way to make the most of what nature has bestowed upon you. In the first place, Miss, you must be sure to thrust out your chin as far as you are able; when you come into a room, always let your chin be the first thing seen of you, as if it were the harbinger of the rest of your person. Secondly, you must never keep your two hands together, in that stiff country manner you now do, for above the space of a moment; but throw sometimes the one and sometimes the other carelessly back, and lean it on your hip; but when you are speaking, be sure you employ both in gestures that may enforce attention to what you say. Then, as for your eyes, Miss, you must always keep them broad open, and be sure to have the last look of every one that takes notice of you.

Miss. Does your ladyship mean the men as well as the women?

Lady. Undoubtedly, the men to chuse. A polite woman, and who is fashionably genteel, is never ashamed of any thing she either sees or hears.

Her ladyship was going on with some farther directions concerning the management of the eyes, when she was interrupted by a footman, who came to acquaint her, that a person who called himself Monsieur Le Petit Solee had brought her ladyship a dozen pair of French shoes; on which she cried out in a kind of transport—'Oh, bring him up! bring 'him up this minute! I have been involved in the utmost distress; I have 'had nothing but odious English shoes 'upon my feet for a whole week past.'

As I was now heartily weary of my situation, and had no curiosity to see either Monsieur Le Petit Solee, or his French shoes, I took the opportunity of the door being open, and left this scene of folly and affectation, regretting the time I had thrown away in being there.

CHAP. VIII.

WHEREIN THE POWER OF BEAUTY, WHEN ACCOMPANIED WITH VIRTUE, IS DISPLAYED, IN A VERY REMARKABLE, AS WELL AS AFFECTING OCCURRENCE.

VANITY, though placed rather among the follies than the vices of human nature, is yet sometimes productive of the very worst we can be guilty of; and the least mischief it does, when indulged to an excess, is to render the person possessed of it obstinate, proud, impatient of contradiction, deaf to reproof, full of imaginary merit, and apt to despise what is truly so in another. This weakness, to give it no worse a name, is generally ascribed to the softer sex; who being from their very childhood accustomed to flattery and praise, are too ready to believe they are in reality the angels and goddesses they are told they are: but, in my opinion, it is doing great injustice to the ladies, to say they are the only culpable; since we often find men who, without having the same excuse, are no less liable to fall into the same error.

Mutantius is one of the most graceful and most accomplished gentlemen of the present age. He has learning, wit, honour, generosity, and good-nature. In fine, he is such as might give him a just title to universal admiration, were he but a little less conscious of deserving it. To render his fine qualities yet more conspicuous, he had the advantages of being descended from a very ancient family, and in possession of an ample fortune. He had not long been arrived at age, before several considerable matches were proposed to him: all the men of his acquaintance, who had sisters or daughters, courted his alliance. Whenever he appeared, the ladies put on their best

beſt looks; and not a few there were, who could not help betraying by their eyes the ſecret languiſhment of their hearts.

Having his choice of ſo many, was probably the cauſe that for a long time hindered him from attaching himſelf to any particular object. He was polite and gallant to all, but made a ſerious addreſs to none. He would pay his morning devoirs to one, walk in the Mall with another, dine with a third, drink tea with a fourth, attend a fifth to the play, or ſome other publick entertainment: in a word, he divided his reſpects ſo equally between each, that no one had reaſon either to exult on the power of her own charms, or dread thoſe of her competitors. The little deity of ſoft deſires would not, however, ſuffer a man ſo formed for love to remain always among the number of inſenſibles. At length, a glance ſhot from Ariſtella's eyes was a dart that reached his very ſoul; all the different graces he had ſeen in other beauties, ſeemed now to him to be ſummed up in her.

Ariſtella was, indeed, very lovely, and had been well educated; but her father, by gaming and other extravagancies, had reduced his eſtate ſo low, that when divided between four daughters, which he left at his deceaſe, the income was ſcarce ſufficient to buy them cloaths according to their birth. Two of them, however, were married to tradeſmen of good repute in the city; and a third to a gentleman of a ſmall eſtate in the country. Ariſtella, who was the youngeſt, and the only one unprovided for, lived ſometimes with one, and ſometimes with another, of the ſiſters; and by this means, having few expences beſides her dreſs, was enabled to appear in as genteel a manner as any woman of a moderate fortune could do.

It was at the houſe of one of her brother-in-law's, who was a linen-draper, and ſerved Mutantius with hollands and cambricks, that he firſt beheld her. Happening to call there when the maſter was abroad, he was deſired to walk into the parlour till his return. Ariſtella was at work with her ſiſter when he came in; but the latter, knowing he was a good cuſtomer, threw aſide what ſhe was about, and received him with a great deal of politeneſs. Her huſband not coming home ſo ſoon as he was expected, ſhe made tea. Mutantius readily accepted the little regale ſhe preſented to him, as it gave him an opportunity of feaſting his eyes on her fair ſiſter. On their entering into converſation, the tongue of Ariſtella loſt her nothing of what her eyes had gained; and as her beauty had in an inſtant captivated his heart, ſo her wit rivetted the chain, and made the conqueſt ſure.

The tradeſman at laſt returning, Mutantius, after having agreed for ſome things he wanted in the ſhop, and ordered them to be ſent home, took an unwilling leave; but carried with him an idea, which had afterwards more influence than he at firſt imagined. Love, in it's beginnings, plays wantonly about the heart, tickling it with flattering images; but having once got full poſſeſſion there, rules with tyrannick ſway, and bears down all before it. Mutantius indulged the pleaſing contemplation of Ariſtella's beauty till he was no longer able to live without ſeeing her, and for this purpoſe went again to the linen-draper's, pretending there were ſome things he had forgot to beſpeak when he was there before. After having bought thoſe things which the ſeeming want of had given him an excuſe for going thither ſo ſoon again, and ſome previous diſcourſe on ordinary matters, he told the draper that he ſhould be glad to have his wife's advice concerning the trimming of ſome ſhirts which were then making for him. To this the other replied, that his wife would think herſelf honoured in doing him any ſervice, but that ſhe was at that time unfortunately abroad.

Mutantius was not ſorry to hear ſhe was out of the way; and reſumed, briſkly—'Well, then, I think it will be 'equal to me, if the young lady who 'was with her when I had the pleaſure 'of drinking tea here, will do me that 'favour; ſhe ſeemed, I thought, to 'have good-nature enough to grant 'ſuch a requeſt.'—'You mean my ſiſter, Sir,' cried the draper. 'I think 'your wife called her ſo,' anſwered Mutantius. 'Yes, Sir,' rejoined the former; 'but ſhe is gone down to Kent 'this morning.'—'I thought ſhe had 'lived with you,' ſaid Mutantius. 'Not 'conſtantly, Sir,' replied he; 'but ſhe 'has left us now ſooner than ſhe would 'have done, on account of her ſiſter's 'lying-in.'

It was eaſy for a man of ſo much wit,

and of so much design as Mutantius now had in his head, to get from the honest, unsuspecting draper, all he wanted to be informed of in relation to the circumstances of Aristella. As the inclinations of this gentleman, vehemently amorous as they were, had not at present the least tendency to marriage with the young beauty, concerning whose affairs he had been so inquisitive, he was far from being mortified on hearing she had no fortune, and was in a manner dependant upon her kindred; nor thought it less conducive to the interest of his passion that she was removed into the country, where he imagined he might find a more easy method of winning her to his desires than he could have done in town, under the eye of a sister who, by the little he had seen of her, he perceived to be a woman of great discretion. He lost no time; but the very next day, attended by one servant, posted down to Canterbury. within a quarter of a mile of which city Aristella at present resided.

Having no acquaintance in that part of the country, he took up his lodgings in one of the best inns; where pretending that it was mere curiosity to see that ancient city which had brought him thither, several offered to accompany him to those places which most deserved the attention of a traveller. Among the number of these hospitable persons was the brother-in-law of Aristella. It is easy to suppose that Mutantius made use of all the arts he was master of to insinuate himself into the good graces of a person whose acquaintance was so necessary to his design: and, indeed, had not this accident happened, there seemed little probability of his accomplishing them; for Aristella kept so close in the house, that though he had been four days at Canterbury, and taken all imaginable pains to get a glimpse of her, he never yet had been so happy.

Mutantius had something in him no less engaging to the men, than enchanting to the women: he knows how to suit himself to the humour of every one he converses with; it was therefore not difficult for him to cultivate a friendship with a plain country gentleman, who, free from all guile, was equally free from all distrust. Beechly, for so he was called, had no other fault than loving his bottle too well; which Mutantius perceiving, fell in with this foible, and thereby gained his whole heart.

These two gentlemen drinking together very late, Mutantius had plied the other so fast with glasses, that he became more than ordinarily intoxicated. Our lover obliged him to suffer himself to be attended home by his footman, and the next morning sent a polite message to enquire of his health. Beechly took this so kindly, that he came immediately after to the lodgings of Mutantius, to shew that he was well, and to desire he would do him the honour of dining with him that day. 'My wife,' said he, 'is in the straw: but she has a sister, who 'is at present with us; a good, smart, 'well-behaved girl, and will receive you 'in the best manner she is able.'

It is not to be doubted, but that the heart of Mutantius fluttered with the most rapturous sensation, on hearing himself invited to a place where he was sure of enjoying the company of her he so much languished for, and had taken such pains to pursue. It is needless to say that he readily accepted so obliging a summons, nor that he prolonged the hour of complying with it. He was met by Beechly, at the gate, with all imaginable demonstrations of a sincere welcome, and conducted into the parlour; where Aristella, who soon after entered, was presented to him.

Whatever emotions Mutantius might feel in approaching to salute her, they were yet inferior to hers, in the first surprize of seeing him there. She had heard her brother Beechly talk of a fine gentleman lately come to Canterbury, and had that morning received orders from him to prepare a handsome dinner for his entertainment; but as she had not heard him mention the name of his new friend, and had no curiosity to ask any thing concerning him, could little expect he was the same she had seen at her other sister's in London. She had, it seems, from the first interview with him, been possessed of sentiments in his favour; which, if not altogether so passionate as those she inspired him with, were yet no less soft and tender: but, conscious of the vast disparity between their fortunes, she had endeavoured to check the growth of an inclination which she thought could only be destructive of her peace. But on this second and unexpected meeting him again, the stifled

wishes

wiſhes of her ſoul burſt out afreſh; a ſudden flow of joy ruſhed over her heart; which, joined to the ſurprize ſhe was in, ſpread a kind of wild, though agreeable confuſion, in her eyes and voice, while ſhe made him thoſe compliments which civility exacted from her to a ſtranger.

Mutantius, to whoſe penetrating eyes the change in her countenance was very viſible, looked on it as a happy preſage of the ſucceſs of his deſign; and the ſecret pleaſure this imagination gave him, brightened all his air, and added new graces to every thing he ſaid or did; ſo that Ariſtella became now quite loſt in love and admiration. This day proved, indeed, extremely fortunate to Mutantius: dinner was no ſooner over, than Beechly was called out to a perſon who waited to ſpeak with him on ſome buſineſs in another room; the lover took this opportunity of declaring his paſſion to his miſtreſs, and relating to her the pains he had taken to get a ſight of her; and the anſwers ſhe made, though very modeſt and diſcreet, were ſuch as gave him no reaſon to deſpair. Beechly returning, he broke off their converſation: he took Mutantius to ſhew him his garden; which, though not ornamented with ſtatues, nor any exotick curioſities, were very pretty. Mutantius was laviſh in his praiſes on every thing he ſaw; but, above all, his fancy ſeemed taken with a long graſs walk, and a cloſe arbour at the end of it. 'If I had ſuch a walk 'as this in town,' ſaid he, 'I ſhould 'never trouble the Mall, Vauxhall, nor 'Ranelagh.'—'Since you cannot carry 'this with you,' replied Beechly, 'you 'ſhall be extremely welcome to make 'as much uſe of it as you think fit, 'while you ſtay in this part of the 'world.'

Mutantius thanked him; but ſaid he was an early riſer, and ſhould chuſe ſuch a walk chiefly for the ſake of meditation in a morning, and that to come at ſuch hours might give too much trouble to the ſervants. 'I can eaſily remedy 'that difficulty, ſince you make it one,' anſwered the other. 'There is a door 'that opens behind the arbour into a 'little field, where I keep a cow: I ſel- 'dom have occaſion to make uſe of the 'key, and it is at your ſervice; ſo you 'may come in as early or as late as you 'pleaſe, without diſturbing any of my 'family, or being diſturbed by them.' The lover made a thouſand acknowledgments to him for this favour, and received the key; which, in his mind, he looked upon as a ſure paſſport to all the happineſs he wiſhed at preſent to enjoy.

He went the next morning, taking a book in his hand, to prevent ſuſpicion, in caſe he ſhould be ſeen; though there was no great danger of that, as Beechly kept but two maids, and one man ſervant; who, it might be ſuppoſed, had too much buſineſs in a morning to ramble in the garden: but he might reaſonably hope to meet with Ariſtella; who, having nothing to employ her time, might probably amuſe ſome part of it in that agreeable place. It is likely, however, he might have been diſappointed for many days together, if Fortune had not now befriended him, as ſhe had hitherto done during the courſe of this adventure.

Ariſtella was there, indeed, before him, in the ſame walk, and very near the arbour through which he entered. She had come thither to gather cinquefoil for her ſiſter, the nurſe who attended her being apprehenſive ſhe would fall into a feveriſh diſorder. It is likely ſhe was little leſs ſurprized, on ſeeing him in that place, than ſhe had been when introduced to him by her brother; but as I was not preſent, and have this part of the ſtory from the report of others, can relate nothing of the particulars of their diſcourſe; and only ſay, in general, that he ſpared no vows nor proteſtations to convince her of his paſſion; and that he prevailed on her to return to him again after having carried in the herbs. His entreaties, joined to her own ſecret inclinations, engaged her to ſee him the next day. This meeting was ſucceeded by another, that by a third, and ſo on for ſeveral mornings together, every one of them ſtill more endearing him to her affections; but, in ſpite of the pleaſure ſhe took in his addreſſes, ſhe could not keep herſelf from ſome doubt of the ſincerity of his paſſion, whenever ſhe reflected on the inequality of their fortunes. One day, expreſſing herſelf very emphatically on that occaſion, he cried out—'Talk not of fortune; by Hea- 'ven, your heart is all I wiſh!' This he repeated ſo often, and ſo tenderly, that ſhe at length confeſſed it was already his.

Having brought her to this point, he now thought proper to let her know the real

real aim of all his courtſhip: he began with telling her, that beauty ſuch as hers merited to be ſet off with all the advantages of dreſs and grandeur; that ſhe had waſted too much of her youth on a mean dependance on her kindred; and concluded with the offer of a large ſettlement; proteſting to her, at the ſame time, that he would never marry any other woman, and that ſhe ſhould live in every thing like his wife except the name.

If a dagger had pierced the gentle breaſt of Ariſtella, it could not have given her more pain than did this cruel declaration. For ſome moments ſhe was unable to make any reply, but burſt into a flood of tears, and diſcovered all the ſymptoms of the moſt violent grief. He endeavoured to calm this tempeſt in her mind by all the arts that love and wit could inſpire: but all was now in vain; a virtuous pride, by degrees, got the better of her ſorrows; and, ſtarting from him, ſhe cried out—'Deceitful 'and ungenerous man! think not that 'your baſe deſires ſhall triumph over the 'weakneſs I have confeſſed for you!— 'No, I will never ſee you more; nor 'henceforward think of you but with 'horror and deteſtation!'

In ſpeaking theſe words, ſhe flew out of the arbour. Rage gave wings to her feet; yet Mutantius would certainly have overtaken her, if the ſight of a man whom Beechly had employed to do ſome work in the garden had not made him turn back. He went to his lodgings much diſconcerted at this accident; but the knowledge he had of Ariſtella's affection for him, kept him from totally deſpairing. He repaired to the arbour next morning, but no Ariſtella appeared; he went again, but had no better ſucceſs. Reſolved to ſee her, if poſſible, he made a viſit at the houſe, and told Beechly, in a free manner, that he was come to take a ſecond dinner with him; to which he replied with a compliment ſuitable to the occaſion.

Mutantius was again diſappointed: Ariſtella, hearing he was there, ſent word to her brother that ſhe had a violent tooth-ache, and deſired he would excuſe her from coming down. This drove the lover almoſt to diſtraction: he went home, wrote to her, and made his footman go, as of his own accord, to chat with the ſervants, and loiter about the houſe while ſhould ſee Ariſtella, and deliver the letter to her. The fellow found means to execute his commiſſion; Ariſtella took the letter on his preſenting it to her, and went up into her chamber; but, after reflecting a little, would not truſt her own heart ſo far as to read this dangerous epiſtle: ſhe therefore put it under a cover; and, having ſealed and directed it, came down, and gave it to the man, ſaying—'There's my anſwer 'to your maſter's letter.'

Never had the vanity of Mutantius met with ſo ſevere a ſhock; yet could he not forbear revering the virtue he attempted to deſtroy. If before he loved, he now adored her; and the more he conſidered her perfections, the more he found her worthy to be his wife; yet, when he thought of marriage, the idea of that ſtate was irkſome to him. He knew that at preſent he was the idol of the fair, but ſhould ceaſe to be ſo if once he became a huſband. He could not bear to loſe his darling admiration, yet was equally unable to bear life without the enjoyment of Ariſtella. After ſome debate within himſelf, his paſſion, however, got the better of his vanity, and he reſolved to marry Ariſtella; but which way to let her know he meant to do ſo, ſeemed as great a difficulty as any he had paſſed through in attempting to ſeduce her: he was convinced ſhe would neither ſee him, nor receive a letter from him; yet, in ſpite of all this, Love, fertile in contrivances, put a ſtratagem into his head which had the deſired effect: it was this—

Beechly's new-born ſon had not been yet baptized, on account of the mother's having been more than ordinarily indiſpoſed during her lying-in. He offered to be one of the ſponſors, which the other gladly accepted. Ariſtella could not now avoid his preſence; but behaved with ſo much reſerve, ſcarce ever looking towards him, that a man leſs conſcious of his own merit might have been abaſhed. After ſome time, when moſt of the company were engaged in converſation, he found an opportunity to ſay to her—'Madam, I beſeech you will 'forgive the raſh propoſal I preſumed 'to make you; be aſſured I have heartily repented of it, and have now no 'deſigns upon you but what are truly 'honourable.' To which ſhe replied—'Sir, I ſhall never believe a man means 'me well, who has once thought ſo 'poorly of me.'—'I only beg,' reſumed

sumed he, 'the liberty of entertaining 'you once more in private; and if what 'I have then to say does not merit your 'pardon and favour, I shall leave Canterbury, and perhaps the world, for 'ever.' He could add no more at that time, Beechly calling him to pledge him in a bumper to the young Christian; but, before they parted, he found means to enforce what he had last said with so moving an air, that she consented to see him the next morning.

The consequence of this interview was a full forgiveness of what was past on the side of Aristella; and on that of Mutantius, a solemn vow of making her his wife the moment she consented to be so: but added, that there were some circumstances in his affairs which required their marriage should be kept secret for a time. To this last article she made no direct answer, at present; but the next day, when they met again by appointment, suffered herself to be overcome by his persuasions, and promised that every thing should be as he would have it. It was at last agreed upon between them, that he should return to London in a few days; and that she should follow, as soon as her sister's recovery permitted to take her leave with decency.

Both these lovers were now in a state of perfect contentment, and each of them observed their promise with the utmost punctuality: but what afterwards befel them, must be the subject of another chapter.

CHAP. IX.

CONTAINS ONLY A CONTINUATION OF THE SAME NARRATIVE, BEGUN IN THE FOREGOING CHAPTER, AND WILL NOT BE CONCLUDED IN THIS.

MUTANTIUS being apprized, by a letter from Aristella, of the day she should come to town, went in his own coach to Greenwich to meet her, and conducted her to a very handsome lodging, in one of the best streets near Bloomsbury Square, where he had also provided servants to attend her. She was at first a little scrupulous of putting herself under his protection, till the sacred ceremony had been performed. He perceived the apprehensions she was under, and immediately relieved them, by renewing his protestations that the next morning should make his person as inviolably hers as his heart had been from the first moment he beheld her; and, at the same time, shewed her a ring and licence, which he had already prepared for that purpose. He supped with her that evening; but when it was over, very respectfully retired, to leave her to that repose he judged necessary after the fatigue of the journey.

I come now to that part of the story which I had an opportunity of being both an eye and ear-witness of. I was acquainted with the gentlewoman of the house where Aristella was placed, and happened to call there on some business the very next morning after that young lady had been brought thither. My friend told me, among other discourse, that she had lett her lodgings at a very high rent; but was apprehensive the person they were for was no better than a kept woman. On my asking what ground she had for such a suspicion, she replied, that she had lett them to a gentleman of fortune, called Mutantius, for the use of a lady whom he brought to take possession of them the night before; and that he had hired servants to wait upon her, who knew as little of the lady as she did. She farther added, that the lady was young and pretty; and that she could not help thinking it a little odd such a one should be under the care of so gay a spark as Mutantius.

As I was perfectly acquainted with the character of Mutantius, I was of opinion she was in the right; and advised her to say nothing till she saw farther into the matter, and not lose so beneficial a lodger on a bare conjecture. She approved of what I said, and I took my leave, but not to go home. What she had told me filled me with a curiosity to discover something more of this affair; so went no farther than the first blind alley I found, where I put on my Invisible Belt, and returned again just as Mutantius knocked at the door. I entered with him, and followed him up stairs. The sight of Aristella convinced me that the good woman had not been mistaken in the description she gave me of her. The lovers ran into each other's arms; and Mutantius, looking on her with the greatest tenderness, spoke thus—

Mutantius. Now, my dearest Aristella,

ſtella, I am come to put a final end to all your doubts either of my love or honour.

Ariſtella. I am pleaſed to think that the perfect confidence I have ſhewn in both gives me ſome ſort of claim to the proof you are now about to give of them, ſince I muſt confeſs myſelf in every other reſpect ſo unworthy of you.

Mutantius. You are worthy of every thing. But, my dear, you forget that there is another teſtimony that I expect from you of the regard you have for me.

Ariſtella. Name it; that my ready compliance may convince you how happy I think myſelf in every opportunity of obliging you.

Mutantius. It is that you will be content that for ſome time our marriage may be kept a ſecret.

Ariſtella. You know I have promiſed it.

Mutantius. Yes, in general terms: but you have ſiſters, who are very dear to you; and though I doubt not of their diſcretion, I cannot think a ſecret ſafe when truſted in ſo many hands. Will then your love for me enable you to endure their reproaches for your ſuppoſed diſhonour, rather than reveal what is inconvenient for me to be made known?

Ariſtella. The trial is a little ſevere, but will not laſt for ever.

Mutantius. No, my dear. A time will come when your innocence ſhall be fully cleared, and, like the ſun, ſhine brighter after this ſhort eclipſe; till then, may I depend that the name of wife and huſband ſhall be known only between ourſelves?

Ariſtella. You may.

Mutantius. Swear it, then.

Ariſtella. By all that's ſacred.

Mutantius. Hold, my dear: I would have you firſt underſtand the full extent of the vow you are about to make. You ſwear that no imaginary provocation on my ſide, nor no unjuſt contempt nor ill treatment you may meet with from the world, ſhall ever extort from you a confeſſion that you are my wife, till I myſelf ſhall publickly acknowledge you to be ſo.

Ariſtella. All this I ſolemnly ſwear; and invoke Heaven to bleſs me as I ſhall religiouſly obſerve it.

Mutantius. Charming, generous creature!—And, in return, to prevent all future apprehenſions in prejudice of my faith or conſtancy from riſing in your breaſt, if it were poſſible for me to take a baſe advantage of the obligation I have laid you under, and make my addreſſes to another woman on the ſcore of marriage, I here releaſe you from your vow, and leave you at liberty to declare yourſelf my wife, aſſert your prior right, and proclaim me for a villain.

Ariſtella. Heaven forbid it ſhould ever come to that!

Mutantius. No, my Ariſtella; there is no danger. I have already rejected greater offers than ever will be made to me again. To deal ſincerely with you, there has been always in my nature an extreme repugnancy to the name of marriage; the name of huſband was irkſome to me: no woman but yourſelf had ever charms to reconcile me to it; but your beauty, ſweetneſs, and unaffected modeſty, have now informed my ſoul, and, by degrees, will make me as proud of Hymen's fetters as I ſhould once have been aſhamed of them.

Ariſtella. It ſhall be my whole ſtudy to make them eaſy to you.

Mutantius. I know it will. But, come, my love, a coach waits to carry us to church; that ſolemn ſcene which fixes the everlaſting happineſs or miſery of all who approach it in the manner we do.

On concluding theſe words, he took her by the hand, and led her down ſtairs. I was cloſe behind them when they went into the coach, which was ordered to drive to Clerkenwell. I preſently ſuppoſed he made choice of this place as there was the leaſt danger of his being ſeen by any one who knew him. I followed on foot; but came time enough to ſee Mutantius reſign that liberty he had once ſet ſo high a value on as to reſolve never to part with. The ceremony was performed by the curate of the pariſh; and the clerk officiated as father, to give away the bride. After all was over, Mutantius deſired their marriage might be regiſtered, and a certificate of it given to Ariſtella; both which were accordingly done.

I now left the new-wedded pair to diſpoſe of themſelves as they thought fit, and returned to my apartment, in order to ruminate at leiſure on an adventure which ſeemed to me to have in it many inconſiſtencies. But the more I thought on this adventure, the more I was confounded; and the reſult of all my meditations

tations was, that it must be left to time to unravel the mystery: I kept, however, a watchful eye on the behaviour of Mutantius, but was little the wiser for the pains I took, as I found he only lived in the same gay and gallant manner he he had always done in respect to the ladies.

But now, methinks, I hear the reader cry out with some impatience—'How 'did Aristella behave all this time? 'How could she, the wife of this incon- 'stant man, support the share that others 'had in his affections?' It is, indeed, impossible for me to say in what manner she would have resented so provoking a cricumstance, if known to her; but she lived too retired for it to reach her ears: she had, however, other troubles more than sufficient for human fortitude to sustain; but of what nature, must be left to the next chapter to explain.

CHAP. X.

THE CATASTROPHE OF THIS ADVENTURE CANNOT FAIL OF EXCITING COMPASSION IN THE BREASTS OF MY FAIR READERS, AND ALSO AFFORD MATTER OF SPECULATION TO THE OTHER SEX.

THE pursuit of other adventures, which shall be inserted in their proper places before the conclusion of this work, hindered me for a long time from going to see in what manner Aristella was treated by Mutantius; but at length, some uneasy reflections on her account raised an impatience in me to know the certainty of her present state. Accordingly I went one day to the house where she was lodged; but, to my great surprize, found she had made but a short stay there, and had been removed a considerable time before my coming. On my asking some questions of my friend concerning the reason of it, the good woman answered me in these or the like terms—'The affair was just as I ex- 'pected,' said she. 'I pity the poor 'young gentlewoman, indeed; she has 'not the looks of such a one; but I 'suppose she has been decoyed by abun- 'dance of fair promises: I wonder, 'however, that Mutantius, knowing the 'character of my house, and that I always 'had people of the best fashion lodge 'with me, should offer to bring a kept- 'mistress under my roof; but I was very 'free with him, and told him my mind 'plainly on the occasion.'

'And pray what answer did he make,' cried I, with some impatience, 'when 'you called her a kept-mistress?'— 'Very little to the purpose, truly,' resumed she; 'he only said that she was a 'gentlewoman, and a friend of his, and, 'as such, expected that I should treat 'her civilly. I told him, it was not in 'my nature to treat any body uncivilly, 'but that I would encourage no such 'doings; and therefore desired he would 'provide another lodging for her. On 'this, he flew into a passion, told me I 'was an ignorant, foolish woman, and 'the like; but I did not regard his 'bouncing; and, as he found I was re- 'solute, took his Madam away in a few 'days afterwards.'

The manner in which this woman spoke, made me extremely commiserate the condition of Aristella, who, though a lawful wife, was obliged, through the caprice of Mutantius, and the vow she had taken, to endure all the contumely due to a prostitute. I would have given almost any thing but the secret of my Invisible Belt and Tablets to have cleared Aristella's innocence in the fullest manner to this gentlewoman; but as there was no doing one without the other, I was compelled to content myself with getting out of her directions to the place where this much injured lady was removed, resolving to take the first opportunity to see what atonement the behaviour of Mutantius made to her in private, for the injustice he did her reputation in publick.

I was so lucky as to find them together the first day I went; but the scene I was witness of, instead of diminishing, very much added to the concern I had carried with me. Aristella was sitting very melancholy in one corner of the room, Mutantius in another, with all the marks of discontent and ill-humour in his countenance. By what followed, it appears that she had been speaking somewhat to him in relation to the discovery of their marriage. I doubt not, by what I saw of her behaviour, both before and afterwards, that she expressed herself in very gentle terms on the occasion; but the bare mention of such a thing to a man of his present way of thinking, was of itself a sufficient offence. I have al-

ready described the posture I found him in; but, just as I entered the room, he replied to what she had said, and that reply drew on a conversation which let me into the whole of both their sentiments.

Mutantius. I am sorry to find you have so little regard for me, and indeed so little prudence, as, whenever I am with you, to fall eternally upon a subject which you know is disagreeable to me.

Aristella. If you loved me half so well as you once pretended, it would not be so disagreeable; and you would, at least, acquaint me with the reasons which oblige me to live in the manner I do.

Mutantius. Perhaps it is not proper for me to reveal them.

Aristella. Oh, Mutantius! I know not what to think of my condition. Why did you marry me?

Mutantius. Because I then liked you better than any other woman, and if I do not still continue to do so, it is your own fault. I hate to be teazed; besides, the conditions of our marriage were that it should be kept a secret.

Aristella. Yes, for a time.

Mutantius. That time will not be shortened by your impatience.

Aristella. It may, for if it lasts much longer my heart must infallibly break.

Mutantius. Pish! women's hearts are not made of such brittle stuff; the head is in more danger, when swelled with pride and vanity.

Aristella. Indeed, Sir, I think it would at least become you to be a little more serious on the occasion.

Mutantius. With all my heart, Madam, as serious as you please; for 'faith I am not in a humour to be merry. Seriously, then, you seem to me to be one of the most ungrateful and most unreasonable women under the sun. Have I not taken you from a dependance on your sisters? Have you not now good lodgings, servants to wait on you, and an allowance sufficient to support you in a fashion beyond what you could ever have expected? yet all this is nothing in your account.

Aristella. Nothing, when balanced against a life of infamy: the very servants you upbraid me with, despise me while they serve me; the people of the house treat me but with an enforced civility; I pass my days as one who was an alien to the world, and had no business in it; never partake the joys of social conversation, never visit, nor am visited, and scarce dare venture to breathe the open air, lest I should be seen by any who have known me, especially by my sisters, who, mean as you think of them, know how to set a just value upon reputation, and to scorn all riches without it.

Mutantius. A very fine catalogue of complaints, truly! Have you any more?

Aristella. Yes, one thing more, which, with what indifference soever you may now regard me, ought not, methinks, to escape your consideration. You know I am far advanced in my pregnancy; perhaps, too, of a son; and can you support the thoughts, that an infant, born the lawful heir of your estate and name, shall be saluted, on his first seeing the light, with the odious title of bastard?

Mutantius. What will he be the worse, unless you expect to have so wise a child as to know what is said of him as soon as he comes into the world?

Aristella. Oh, Mutantius! Mutantius! this is cruel dealing.

She said no more, but wept bitterly. Mutantius, who, it must be owned, has some good-nature, seemed much moved at seeing her thus; and having looked on her some moments with a great deal of tenderness, bid her come to him: she obeyed, but advanced with the most sorrowful and dejected air; he pulled her to him, made her sit upon his knee, and kissing away the tears, he spoke thus—

Mutantius. Come, my poor Aristella, do not be so foolish; you have no cause for weeping; you know yourself virtuous, and I know you are so, and have no need to be afflicted at the mistaken opinion others may have of you, especially as it is not to last always.

Aristella. If I were certain when this event would happen, even though it were much longer than I hope it will, I should wait with patience.

Mutantius. You must depend for that upon my love and honour; it is not in my power to assign the day and hour. To deal sincerely with you, I have been a railer at marriage, have refused offers of that nature as much above my expectations as I was above yours, and I cannot all at once submit to be pointed at for a husband, and hear people laugh and cry out, that I had thrown myself away: but of this, my dear, you may assure yourself, that I will endeavour to get rid of these scruples as soon as possible. In the mean time, I will give you as much of my company as can be

spared

ſpared from buſineſs and other attachments which are not to be diſpenſed with. I came on purpoſe to devote this whole day to you, drive me not from you by your diſcontent; kiſs me, and give me your promiſe that you will be entirely eaſy.

She complied readily with the firſt part of this injunction, and ſaid ſhe would do her beſt to perform the other. But by what I had now ſeen of the behaviour and diſpoſition of Mutantius, I found reaſon to believe it would be yet a great while before he would bring himſelf to make a declaration of his marriage; ſo reſolved not to take the trouble of any farther inquiſitions, but wait till common fame ſhould give me intelligence of it. This event, however, happened much ſooner than I expected; but was brought about by an accident which excited the extremeſt pity inſtead of congratulations. The unfortunate Ariſtella was not born to enjoy a happineſs ſhe ſo ardently had wiſhed for, and ſo long been made to hope; death alone had the power to give what life in vain had waited for; and the ſame breath which told me Mutantius had acknowledged her for his wife, informed me alſo that ſhe was no more.

Ariſtella, on her leaving the country, was charged with letters and ſome little preſents from Mrs. Beechly to her two ſiſters in London; but being hindered from executing this commiſſion in perſon, by the obligation Mutantius had laid her under, ſhe ſent what was entruſted to her care by a porter, accompanied with a little billet from herſelf; in which ſhe told them, that an affair of the utmoſt conſequence kept her at preſent from ſeeing them, but that ſhe hoped to do ſo in a ſhort time, and would then acquaint them with the reaſons for having abſented herſelf, and begged they would entertain no unfavourable thoughts of her conduct in this point.

As ſhe was circumſtanced, it was not in her power to have acted otherwiſe: yet what ſatisfaction could ſuch a letter give the two ſiſters? for a girl to baniſh herſelf from her kindred, without acquainting them with the motive, or the place to which ſhe was retired, had a right to raiſe in them conjectures of the worſt ſort. They were diſtracted at the thoughts of her ſuppoſed ruin, and ſpared no pains to find her out, in order to bring her home, and ſnatch her from the ſhame they imagined ſhe was involved in. Fruitleſs was their ſearch for a long time; but chance, at length, diſcovered not only where ſhe lived, but alſo that ſhe was ſupported by a gentleman, and looked upon as a kept-miſtreſs. Quite enraged, they went to the houſe where ſhe was lodged, and the door happening to be open, flew up ſtairs without any ceremony, and burſt in upon her. The ſight of her—for her pregnancy was viſible—added to the paſſions they were before enflamed with: they reproached, they reviled her in the moſt bitter terms; while poor Ariſtella, bound by the fatal oath ſhe had taken, could ſay nothing in defence of her innocence, but what ſerved to convince them more fully of her guilt. After having loaded her with opprobrious names, they left her with the ſame precipitation they had come, vowing never more to ſee or think of her as a ſiſter.

Impoſſible it is for any one to conceive what the ſoul of Ariſtella ſuffered in this ſhocking ſtroke: conſcious of innocence, yet labouring under all the appearance of guilt; ſcandalized, abuſed by thoſe to whom ſhe had been ſo dear, yet incapable either of defending her wronged virtue, or of blaming the ſeverity ſhe was treated with for her ſuppoſed fall; every paſſion that can agitate the human heart, at once aſſailed, and overwhelmed her with a variety of anguiſh; the force of which had ſuch an effect upon her, as to cauſe an abortion that ſame night, and alſo to throw her into convulſions, which in a few hours rendered her life deſpaired of by all about her. In her intervals, between thoſe fits which deprived her of all ſenſe and motion, ſhe cried out for Mutantius, aſked where he was, and ſaid ſhe could not die without ſeeing him. Meſſengers were immediately diſpatched to him; he came, ſeemed greatly affected at the condition he found her in, but was much more ſo, when he was informed what it was had thrown her into it. She was inſenſible on his entrance, but recovering ſoon after, and ſeeing him ſo near her, catched hold of his hand, and with agonies inexpreſſible, ſaid to him—'Oh, Mutantius! you will 'now be rid of a tie you have been 'aſhamed to own.'—'No, by Heaven!' cried he; 'Live, live, Ariſtella, and I 'will declare to all the world that you 'are my wife, my lawful married wife.'

Whether it were this ſudden ruſh of joy, on hearing him ſpeak theſe words,

that was too powerful for her weakneſs to ſuſtain, or that the lamp of life was waſted by the agonies ſhe had before endured, is altogether uncertain; but ſhe expired that moment, yielding up her laſt breath on the boſom of her too late repenting huſband. Love, pity, and remorſe, now engroſſed all his faculties; he kept his promiſe, acknowledged her for his wife, had her intombed with great funeral pomp in his own family vault, and paid all imaginable honours to her memory. Whether he will ever relapſe into his former vanities, time alone muſt ſhew; but at preſent, this once gay, thoughtleſs rover, either is, or affects to be, loſt to the joys he lately was ſo fond of; behaves with the utmoſt indifference towards the fair ſex; ſeldom goes to any publick place; ſees but little company at home; and ſeems to be in every thing the very reverſe of what he was.

As to the ſiſters of the unfortunate Ariſtella, they were ſeized with the moſt deep affliction, when they came to know the ſad effects their raſh reſentment had occaſioned—which may ſerve as a warning to all perſons not to be over haſty in cenſuring actions, the true meaning of which they cannot immediately comprehend.

END OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

THE

INVISIBLE SPY.

BOOK VI.

CHAP. I.

IS DEDICATED ENTIRELY TO THE LADIES, AS IT RELATES AN ADVENTURE WHICH NEARLY CONCERNS THEM TO TAKE NOTICE OF.

AMONG all the numerous modes which the wantonneſs of luxury has of late years introduced into this kingdom for deſtroying of time, I know of none more fatal to the virtue and reputation of the female ſex than maſquerades; I mean, as that amuſement is at preſent conducted. Indeed, when a ſelect company of ladies and gentlemen agree among themſelves, or are invited by ſome perſon of condition, to divert each other in ſuch diſguiſes as their ſeveral fancies ſhall make choice of, the caſe is widely different; for there, after paſſing a few hours in muſick, dancing, and pleaſant raillery, according to the characters they aſſume, the maſks are all thrown aſide, and every one appears as he is; ſo that none will venture to talk or act beneath a vizard, in ſuch a manner as, when he ſtands revealed, will either reflect ſhame on himſelf, or give offence to thoſe he has been entertaining. Maſquerades, thus managed, I cannot but allow to be not only innocent but laudable amuſements, as they ſerve to whet the wit and exhilarate the mind.

But here, ſorry am I to ſay it, the maſquerade houſes may with propriety enough be called ſhops, where opportunities for immorality, prophaneneſs, obſcenity, and almoſt every kind of vice, are retailed to any one who will become a cuſtomer; and at the low rate of ſeven and twenty ſhillings, the moſt abandoned courtezan, the moſt profligate rake, or common ſharper, purchaſes the privilege of mingling with the firſt peers and peereſſes of the realm, and not ſeldom affronts both modeſty and greatneſs with impunity. I perceive, to my great ſatisfaction, there are ſome ladies who, touched with a juſt ſenſe of what is owing to their dignity, are determined not to expoſe themſelves any more in a place where, if no worſe enſues, the moſt licentious freedoms of ſpeech, at leaſt, are often offered to the chaſteſt ears; and I am not without hope, that the influence of their example will prevail on many others to do the ſame. For the benefit, however, of the unwary, and thoſe who, by their ſmall acquaintance in town, are ignorant of the cuſtoms of theſe dangerous amuſements, it will not be amiſs to relate

relate an adventure which I was witneſs of, and may ſerve as a warning to all who are truly innocent, and deſire to remain ſo.

Alexis and Matilda were the ſon and daughter of two gentlemen who lived near Newcaſtle. They had loved each other even before either well knew what was meant by the paſſion; and, as their underſtanding ripened, their inclinations increaſed. Hope, for ſome time, gilded the proſpect of their mutual wiſhes; but, when they leaſt expected, a ſtop was put to the conſummation by an unfortunate diſagreement between their parents. Alexis was forbid to ſee Matilda, and Matilda ever to think on Alexis: but theſe commands had little authority over hearts ſo fondly enamoured as theirs; they formed the moſt romantick contrivances to keep alive the flame with which each had inſpired the other; ſome of which ſucceeded ſo well, as to enable them to continue an intercourſe by letters, and even to gain private interviews. It was the father of Alexis who of the two had been moſt refractory; and he dying a ſmall time after, the young gentleman found means to reconcile matters ſo effectually with the parents of Matilda, that they at length conſented to give her to him, and compleated the happineſs of the equally loving and beloved pair.

Matilda, whoſe every care, hope, and joy, had all been centered in her dear Alexis, had nothing now to wiſh beyond what ſhe was in poſſeſſion of; and Alexis thought himſelf ſo bleſt, that he even defied the power of Fortune to give him any cauſe of diſquiet. Fatal ſecurity! How little dependance for the future is there on the preſent good! They had not long enjoyed the ſweets of this ſo-much-deſired union, before Matilda, who had never been in London, expreſſed a curioſity to ſee it. Alexis, proud to embrace every opportunity of giving her pleaſure, immediately took the hint, and told her he was ready to conduct her there as ſoon as ſhe pleaſed. Accordingly they ſet out, and arrived in London about September. Alexis took ready-furniſhed lodgings, in a handſome houſe near St. James's, for ſix months; in which time he thought he ſhould be able to ſhew Matilda every thing worth her ſeeing in town.

Alexis had received his firſt precepts at Weſtminſter School; and having no relations in London, his father requeſted me, by letters, to call ſometimes at the houſe where he boarded, and have an eye over his behaviour. I did ſo; and the advice I gave him being delivered not in a magiſterial but friendly manner, the lad conceived a very great affection for me from that time, and has preſerved it ever ſince. He made me the compliment of a firſt viſit on his coming to town, told me how happy he was, and begged I would be no ſtranger to the fair perſon who had made him ſo. I accepted the invitation, and went the next day. On his preſenting Matilda to me, I was ſtruck with admiration; for, beſides every thing that could conſtitute a perfect beauty, there was a ſweet ſimplicity, and a chearful, unaffected innocence, which ſhone through the whole, and brightened every grace.

As the ſole excitement Matilda had to take a journey to London was to gratify her curioſity with the ſight of it, there was no eminent ſtructure, or place of note, to which ſhe was not conducted by her Alexis. A new ſcene of diverſions opened as the winter ſeaſon came on; plays, operas, and maſquerades, now began to attract attention: the two firſt of theſe amuſements Matilda was not altogether a ſtranger to, having often ſeen ſomewhat like them acted by ſtrolling companies in the country, but ſhe had not the leaſt notion of maſquerades; and the little account Alexis was able to give her making her more impatient to know what ſort of entertainment they afforded, it may be eaſily ſuppoſed that ſo indulgent an huſband would not ſuffer her to continue long in ſuſpence; it may be, too, that he had ſome curioſity of his own to gratify in this point, having, it ſeems, never been at a maſquerade himſelf.

Tickets accordingly were purchaſed, and habits hired. I happened to make a morning viſit the day they were to go, and found Matilda buſy in ornamenting a little hat and crook. The moment I entered the room, ſhe told me, with the greateſt pleaſure in her countenance, that ſhe was to be at the maſquerade that night, and was to aſſume the character of a ſhepherdeſs. I replied, ſhe could not take upon her one more ſuitable to her youth and innocence.

I ſaid nothing to them of my deſign; but, when evening came, I equipped myſelf

myself with a domino, and hasted to that Babel of hurry and confusion; where it was no difficult matter to discover the persons I sought after, as I knew the dresses they were in. I soon distinguished the shepherdess, and the husband by the blue domino I had seen lying on a table in his dining-room, and perceived there were many eyes upon Matilda; for though her face was concealed, her shape and air had somewhat in them sufficiently attractive. But there was one who, above all the rest, seemed particularly attentive to her motions: he was in the habit of a huntsman; a character which I afterwards had reason to say to myself suited very well with the intentions he had in his head that night. Which way soever Matilda turned, he took care not to lose sight of her; but, as she kept close to Alexis, neither he nor any one else had an opportunity of speaking to her. I hovered as near them as I could without being taken notice of; and it gave me a good deal of diversion, to see the surprize this innocent country lady testified at hearing the freedoms with which some people, who seemed to be perfect strangers, accosted each other.

A gentleman crossing the room with his mask in his hand, was known to Alexis; who, on sight of him, cried out to Matilda—'Look yonder, my 'dear! there is Mr. Freeman! I never 'heard of his being in town. I will 'just step and tell him where we lodge: 'do you sit here till I come back.' He then seated her on a bench, and went hastily after his friend, who had passed into another room. I now doubted not but the huntsman would snatch his opportunity of entertaining Matilda; but I lost sight of him in an instant; he vanished, as it were, from the place, and I saw him no more. The fair shepherdess, however, was not to remain neglected. I found several advancing towards her; one of whom was the most grotesque, as well as disagreeable figure, I ever beheld: his stature was far from what could be called tall, but the circumference of his carcase exceeded that of any three men in the whole assembly; his legs looked like the pillars of a church-porch, and when he moved were at such a distance from each other, that a boar of a moderate size might easily pass between them without being incommoded. He had on the habit of a Turkish bashaw; which was the worst, indeed, he could have chose; his huge ears, discovered by the shortness of his turban, hung upon his shoulders, as did the wallets under his chin upon his breast: in a word, he could have no deformity that the dress he was in did not shew to advantage.

This enormous creature had no sooner reached the place where Matilda sat, than he threw himself down by her on the bench, and accosted her with language which I should never forgive myself, nor expect to be forgiven by my reader, to repeat; but I was glad to find, by the whispers of some people behind me, that, instead of a gentleman, as I at first took him for, he was no other than a bully at a noted brothel in Covent Garden, and was known about town by the name of Lumper Hammock. I cannot pretend to say whether this fellow was encouraged by any other person to behave to Matilda in the manner he did merely to put her spirits into a hurry, or whether he was instigated to it only by his own impudence and brutality: but, whatever it might be, the situation of that poor lady was greatly to be pitied; she moved by little and little as far from him as the bench would give her leave; but he still followed, and would needs keep close to her, and persecute her with his ribaldry. Sometimes she got up, and looked round to see for her husband; then sat down again, not daring to leave the place for fear of missing him; but all the time shewed tokens of the utmost agitation of mind.

At length the blue domino appeared; on which she started from her seat, and running to him, cried—'Oh, my dear, 'I am glad you are come!' He only replied, in a low voice—'Aye, aye, let 'us be gone!' and, taking her by the hand, led her hastily away. I pleased myself with the thoughts of having seen Matilda safe under the protection of her husband, and was equally so that he had discovered little approbation of the masquerade, by his leaving it at a time when the diversion was at it's height, and more company coming in than going out.

But the satisfaction I enjoyed in both these points, vanished in a moment. Alexis returned; his mask was now off, and he passed directly to the place where he had left Matilda; then started back. Confusion and surprize overspread his face;

face; he threw his eyes wildly round the room, then ran through every part of it; and, without conſidering how much he expoſed himſelf to the ridicule of that giggling aſſembly, aſked firſt of one, and then of another, if they had ſeen a ſhepherdeſs in green and ſilver, and if they knew what was become of her. This ſtruck me with infinite concern, as it made me know Matilda had been deceived by the ſight of the blue domino; and, in ſpite of my unwillingneſs to let him ſee I had come to a place where I had refuſed to accompany him, was juſt ſtepping forward to inform him of what had happened, when a lady, hearing his enquiries, ſaid—'Sir, the lady I ſaw 'with you, in the dreſs you mention, 'went away a little while ago with a 'gentleman in a blue domino, much 'the ſame as your own.' On which he cried out—'Oh Heavens! what curſed 'miſtake is this!'

In uttering this exclamation, he flew out of the room like lightning, without ſtaying to thank the lady for her intelligence. I followed as faſt as I could, and found him at the door of the houſe, encompaſſed with hackney-coachmen, chairmen, and link-boys; among whom he was vainly endeavouring to get ſome account of his loſt ſhepherdeſs. One of them, it ſeems, had ſaid he ſaw a lady, in the habit he deſcribed, go into a coach with a gentleman, but could tell nothing either of the figure of the coach, or where it was ordered to drive. Finding no information could be gained in the place where he was, he withdrew from the crowd, as I ſuppoſe to conſider what method he ſhould purſue; for he continued in a fixed poſture for two or three minutes, leaning againſt ſome rails before an adjacent houſe. My heart bled for him; and if I had been capable of offering him either advice or conſolation, would not have kept at the diſtance I did: but the accident that had happened was without a remedy; and I had often obſerved, that to preach up moderation in the firſt guſts of paſſion ſerve but to inflame it more.

I thought there were no meaſures he could take that night; yet imagining he had ſomething in his head, was deſirous of ſeeing what event his cogitations would produce: I therefore laid hold of the opportunity I now had of ſtepping behind the cover of a hackney-coach in waiting, and girded on my Belt of Inviſibility, which I always carried in my pocket, in caſe any thing ſhould fall in my way to give me occaſion to make uſe of it. The influence of my valuable gift had but juſt taken effect, by being warm upon my body, when Alexis rouzed himſelf out of his reverie, and walked very faſt up the ſtreet. I kept pace with him till he came to the houſe where he lodged. The door being opened by his own footman, who ſat up for him—'Is my wife come home?' cried he. The fellow anſwered in the negative; and ſeeming ſomewhat ſurprized at this queſtion, he threw himſelf into the parlour, ſaying to himſelf—'How mad 'a hope did I entertain that ſhe might 'have found ſome means to eſcape the 'hands of her raviſher, and been here 'before me!—No, no, 'tis impoſſible! 'the villain doubtleſs will ſecure his 'prey. Curſed, curſed maſquerade! 'invented by the fiends for the de'ſtruction of virtue!'

While he was thus ſpeaking, he tore off his domino with agonies not to be expreſſed, and ſtamped it under his feet; then turning to his ſervant, went on thus—

Alexis. William, your miſtreſs is run away with; ſtolen from me by ſome villain in a domino like my own: ſhe is loſt for ever unleſs immediately recovered. Fly, this minute, to every tavern and bagnio you can think of; deſcribe her habit; enquire if ſuch a one, with a perſon in a blue domino, entered there. Be gone this inſtant! while I run to a juſtice of peace, and get a warrant to ſearch in all ſuſpected places.

William. What part of the town, Sir, do you think it moſt likely I ſhall hear of her?

Alexis. Alas! I am as ignorant of that as you: but all parts muſt be ſearched. Fly, then, good William!—and, do you hear, aſk every hackney-coachman you meet with if he ſet any ſuch perſons down, and where? Away, I ſay!—ſtay not to conſider!—a moment may confirm her ruin and my diſhonour!

The fellow obeyed without making any farther reply; but I perceived, by his countenance, was not very well contented with the errand he was ſent upon: and Alexis went out of the houſe at the ſame time he did, in order to have recourſe to a magiſtrate in this exigence, as he ſaid he would. I had no inclination to follow either maſter or man on an expedition

tion which promiſed ſo little ſucceſs; therefore made all the haſte I could to my own apartment, very much fatigued in body, yet much more ſo in mind, at the unfortunate miſtake poor Matilda had fallen into, and which I had all the reaſon in the world to fear would be attended with the moſt dreadful conſequences.

CHAP. II.

CONTAINS THE CONCLUSION OF A NARRATIVE, WHICH I AM CERTAIN THERE IS ONE PERSON IN THE WORLD WHO CANNOT READ WITHOUT BEING FILLED WITH THE MOST POIGNANT REMORSE, UNLESS HE IS AS DEAD TO ALL SENSE OF HUMANITY AS OF HONOUR.

MY impatience to know if Matilda was yet come home, or if the reſearches of Alexis had gained him any information concerning her, made me reſolve to go to his lodgings in the morning; but whether I ſhould make this viſit in my Viſible or Inviſible capacity, I was for ſome time at a loſs: at laſt, it ſeemed moſt eligible to appear in *propria perſona*, as if I came only to aſk ſome queſtions concerning the maſquerade, and how they approved of that diverſion, as it was the firſt time they partook of it; and alſo to take no notice of my being apprized of any thing that had happened there, unleſs he related it to me himſelf, which I did not much doubt of his doing. Accordingly I went; and, upon my entering into the dining-room, Alexis ran to me, and began the recital of his misfortune in this pathetick exclamation—'Oh, my friend, I am undone and ruined for ever! The author, giver, and partaker, of all my happineſs, is loſt! torn from me by ſome laſcivious, ſome inhuman villain! and him whom yeſterday you beheld the moſt bleſt of men, you now ſee the moſt accurſed and moſt wretched of all created beings!'

He then proceeded to inform me, as well as the diſtraction of his thoughts would give him leave, of the method he had taken for the recovery of his loſt treaſure; how he had paſſed the whole night and that morning in ſearch of her, and that all his enquiries had been fruitleſs.

I then adviſed him to put an advertiſement in the papers, deſcribing the ſhape and ſtature of Matilda, with all the particulars of her dreſs, and offering a handſome reward to any one who ſhould give information of the place at which ſhe alighted out of a hackney-coach, in company with a gentleman in a blue domino, between the hours of twelve and one. 'This you may do,' ſaid I, 'without mentioning any name, 'except that of the perſon to whom 'ſuch intelligence may be brought; 'and it is very likely either the coach-'man who carried her, or ſome one 'who might be about the door where 'ſhe was ſet down, or even the ſer-'vants of the houſe, will, for the ſake 'of the gratuity, make that diſcovery 'which all your perſonal enquiries might 'not be able to obtain.'

I had no ſooner ended, than a ſudden dawn of chearfulneſs gleamed upon his languid face; and, to ſhew how much he approved of the thought, took pen and paper, and immediately wrote in almoſt the ſame terms I had expreſſed it; ſpecifying, at the ſame time, a coffee-houſe where the reward ſhould be paid, on the requeſted intelligence being brought. After this, Nature, who will not be denied her rites, whatever vexations may intervene to rob her of them, ſpread a certain drowſineſs upon his eye-lids, which I perceiving, perſuaded him to favour; and, on my promiſing to come again the ſame evening, he lay down on the bed, and left me at liberty to purſue my inclinations.

As I had now no engagement upon my hands, and had not been at White's for a conſiderable time, it was now my full deſign to go thither, imagining it might not be improbable but I might hear ſomething of Matilda; but as I had ſome very good reaſons not to appear in that place, I ſtepped into the firſt nook I found in my way, and put on my Belt of Inviſibility. I was but juſt equipped, and paſſing on to my intended rout, when I ſaw a chair, with the curtains cloſe drawn, ſtop at a few paces before me. I ſhould have taken no notice of this, if one of the fellows had not lifted up the top, and told the perſon in it that he had forgot whether it were the Red or the Green Lamps. The

anſwer was given in a voice which I preſently knew to be Matilda's; and, if I had not ſo well remembered, as I did, the accents, I ſhould have ſuſpected it was no other than herſelf, by her ſaying —'The Two Green Lamps.'

On finding it was ſhe, the reader will eaſily believe I had more curioſity to ſee the interview between her and Alexis than any thing elſe I could have in my head. I followed the chair till it came to the houſe, and on the door being opened, ſlipped in with it. On her alighting, Mrs. Soberton, who was miſtreſs of the houſe, ran out of the parlour, and was beginning to teſtify her joy at her return, though mingled with ſome demonſtrations of ſurprize, to ſee her in the condition ſhe was, which, indeed, was deplorable enough; her head without any other covering than a handkerchief careleſsly tied over her diſhevelled hair, her garments torn, her eyes ſwelled with tears, every feature diſtorted, and all the tokens of diſtraction and deſpair about her. She made no anſwer to what the good gentlewoman ſaid; but, after throwing ſome money to the chairmen, ran haſtily up into the dining-room, where, flinging herſelf on a ſettee, ſhe cried out—'Where is Alexis!' To which Mrs. Soberton, who had followed as well as myſelf, replied—'Oh, Madam, 'you cannot imagine what trouble both 'he and all of us have had on your ac-'count!'

I know not whether that unhappy lady would have declared to Mrs. Soberton any part of what had befallen her or not; for Alexis, who either had not fallen aſleep, or was eaſily awaked, heard his wife's voice, and came flying out of the chamber that inſtant. Mrs. Soberton, diſcreetly judging that they might not chuſe to have a third perſon witneſs of their diſcourſe, went directly down ſtairs; but the Inviſible remained, and his wonderful Tablets received the impreſſion of the following dialogue between them:

Matilda. Oh, Alexis, why did you leave me?

Alexis. Why did you leave the place where I deſired you to wait for my return?

Matilda. I ſtirred not from it but to follow you, as I then thought.

Alexis. Conſuſion! How could you be ſo miſtaken?

Matilda. Alas, I had no apprehenſion of the deception put upon me! His habit was exactly like yours; his ſtature the ſame; he ſpoke in a low voice; but if he had not, my ſpirits were in too much agitation at the impudence of a fellow who had but juſt before accoſted me, to have diſtinguiſhed the difference.

Alexis. Oh, my torn heart! But ſay, Who is the villain that betrayed you! Where were you carried!

Matilda. Alas, the precautions he took have left me ignorant of both; and all I know is, that I am undone!

Alexis. Diſtraction!—Undone, and not know by whom! nor even in what place! all means for my revenge barred up! Yet, perhaps, I may be able to diſcover ſomething—Tell me in an inſtant all the particulars of the ſtory!

Matilda. I will, though every word will ſtab me to the ſoul, and inflict anew the ſhocks I have undergone.

Alexis. No preparations; be quick, and anſwer my demand at once.

Matilda. Have patience, then; for while you look ſo terrible I cannot ſpeak.

Alexis. You cannot think I would hurt you; ſpeak then, and break at once the heart of thy wretched huſband!

Matilda. Oh, which way ſhall I begin?—how end?

Alexis. Keep me not on the rack!

Matilda. Soon as I ſaw the counterfeit Alexis approach, I roſe to meet him; and on his bidding me come, and ſtretching forth his hand, I gave him mine, glad to find myſelf conducted from that mingled crowd, which I had ſeen too much of to deſire to continue any longer with. We went into a coach, where I began to tell him how I had been affronted by an ugly huge man in a Turkiſh habit; but he made no anſwer either to that or any other idle prate I entertained him with, till the coach ſtopped, and he handed me into a houſe, the entry of which was full of men, who were running backwards and forwards with candles in their hands, and ſeemed very buſy. I aſked where we were going; he ſtill made no reply; but after a ſhort whiſper to one of the fellows, led me up ſtairs.

Alexis. 'Sdeath! why did you go? Then was your time to have cried out for reſcue!

Matilda. What, from my huſband! I could not as yet know him from any other than yourſelf. I was, indeed, a little ſurprized at this behaviour; but imagined

imagined it was owing to some little whim you had taken into your head, on purpose to laugh at my simplicity. Being warm with having my mask on so long, I plucked it off as soon as we got into the room, but he clapped it on again, a man being then just entering with a bottle and glasses in his hand, which having set down on a table, he immediately withdrew. My conductor then bolted the door, and running towards me, said—'Now, my angel, I may feast 'my eye with all that heaven of beauty, 'which, while beneath a cloud, attracted 'my admiration; and you behold the 'man who from this happy moment de-'votes himself entirely to your charms.' With these words, he took off both mine and his own vizard. I shrieked, and surely had fainted with the fright, if an equal proportion of rage had not kept up my spirits.

Alexis. What said he then?

Matilda. A thousand romantick lyes, such as I have read in plays and novels, which I answered only with revilings; till perceiving my just scorn had no effect upon him, I had recourse to tears and entreaties; told him I was a married woman, that I had a husband dearer to me than my soul, and by whom I was as much beloved, and conjured him not to detain me.

Alexis. Did not this move him?

Matilda. Oh no, not in the least; the audacious wretch but laughed at this remonstrance, said that I was a fool, and knew not the true interest of my sex, but that he would instruct me better, and make me happy, though against my will.

Alexis. Execrable dog! But go on.

Matilda. You may easily believe, that he who could speak such words, would also accompany them with actions of the same nature. I resisted all I could the indecent liberties he took, called heaven and earth to my assistance, but in vain; I was at last overpowered. In the midst of tears, reproaches, swoonings, he effected his brutal purpose, and made me the most miserable of women!

Alexis. Most miserable, indeed! After this, I suppose, he would have suffered you to depart?

Matilda. Can you think me vile enough to continue one moment in the presence of that detested monster, when I was at liberty to leave him? This, indeed, is cruel. Oh, Alexis! I hate myself for what I have been compelled to suffer; do not you hate me too?

Alexis. Oh, 'tis too much for man to bear! Yet one thing more, Matilda; describe, as near as possible, the features and complexion of this inhuman ravisher.

Matilda. Alas, the horror I was in from the first moment I found myself in the power of a stranger, hindered me from taking any great notice. All I can say is, that he had dark eyes, a clear and ruddy skin; and though his behaviour rendered him odious to me, with others, I believe, he may pass for handsome.

Alexis. Young, I suppose?

Matilda. About five or six and twenty, as far as I can judge.

Alexis. Had he the appearance of a man of rank and fortune?

Matilda. Every thing I saw about him, which properly belonged to himself, bespoke him such; but doubly disguised. Did you not take notice of an huntsman at the masquerade?

Alexis. Yes, and remember he always kept near us. Was he the ravisher?

Matilda. The same. He told me he had his eye upon me from the first moment I came in, and when he saw you left me, ran and procured a domino as like yours as he could get, in hopes I might be, as, alas! I really was, deceived by that fatal habit.

Alexis. 'Tis well; I may perhaps hunt him.

The eyes of Alexis seemed to flash fire while he uttered these words: after which he stood musing for some time; then turning to his wife, who still sat weeping in the same posture she had thrown herself into at her entrance, spoke thus to her—

Alexis. Rise, Matilda, retire to your chamber, and endeavour to compose yourself to rest.

Matilda. What, so early? 'Tis not yet six o'clock.

Alexis. No matter, your condition requires it; you have wak'd too long, therefore pray go.

Matilda. Will you come too?

Alexis. Do not expect me, I have much to think upon, and must be alone; there is a fermentation in my mind which must have time to settle; to morrow I may be at more ease; I pray you then to give me liberty this night.

With this, she took a candle and withdrew; but with a look and gesture so truly pity-moving, that if a painter had been to draw the picture of Despair, he could not have copied from an original more striking.

He then called for Mrs. Soberton, told her his wife had been very much frighted, and was indisposed; so begged she would assist her in any thing she might stand in need of. She made no reply, but went out of the room, I suppose, to do what he requested of her. I was about to follow her, but seeing Alexis put on his wig, which he had plucked off when he went to lie down, thought he was going on some expedition which it might be worth my taking the pains to explore. To this end I slipped down stairs while he was taking up his sword and hat, got out of the house before him, divested myself of my Belt, became visible, and met him some few paces distant. I told him I was returning to his lodgings according to my promise, and affected some surprize at seeing him abroad: he seemed pleased that he had not missed me, and repeated in a few words the sum of what I have been relating; adding, that he now flattered himself with being able to trace out the person who had injured him, by the description Matilda had given of him; and then intreated I would be so good as to accompany him in the search he was about to make; to which request I readily consented.

I found his scheme was, to enquire among those people who let out dresses for the masquerade, if any account could be given of a gentleman who the night before had hired, first the habit of a huntsman, and afterwards a blue domino. The thing, indeed, seemed feasible enough in itself, though it did not answer expectation. We went to several shops without receiving the least information; and all we could learn was, that a gentleman, habited like a huntsman, had come in a very great hurry for a blue domino, which had not been returned till about half an hour before our coming; but the name or quality of the person who hired it, the woman protested she knew nothing of. Alexis then demanded, somewhat hastily, who it was had brought it back; she smiled both at this interrogatory, and the manner in which it was made; and replied, that she was talking to customers at that time in the shop; but if she had been less engaged, she should scarce have taken any notice—'For,' said she, 'provided we have our 'goods again, and are paid for the use 'of them, it is not our business to exa-'mine farther.'

Here ended the fruitless search of Alexis. He had now no shadow of hope for discovering the ravisher, but in the advertisement I had persuaded him to get inserted in the news-papers; and his despair became so outrageous, that it was with much difficulty I prevailed on him to go home. I went with him, fearing, if he was left alone in the street, he might be guilty of some extravagancy. It was one of the most fine frosty nights I had ever seen; and, while we were knocking at the door, he looked up towards the sky, and, with a voice denoting the extremest bitterness of heart, burst into this exclamation—'How many thou-'sand twinkling stars are there, yet not 'one among them all a friend to me, or 'poor undone Matilda!'

I went home with him, but privately gave William a caution not to go to sleep, but keep near his master, and be attentive to all his motions, in order to prevent any fatal effect of the present distraction of his mind. I then went home, but with an anxiety for this truly worthy, though ill-fated pair, that made me quit my bed very early next morning, with a resolution to exert my utmost endeavours for the mitigation of their sorrows, and, if possible, to reconcile Alexis to a misfortune which was without a remedy; but, unluckily for my design, a person came to speak with me about some business which detained me till almost twelve o'clock.

On my arrival at the place where I so much wished to be, I found Alexis just come in before me. He appeared with a countenance much more composed than the night before, but very pensive and melancholy: he presently acquainted me, however, with the occasion of his having been abroad; it was this—He told me he had passed the whole night in considering how he should act in relation to Matilda; and finding it a thing inconsistent with his honour to suffer her to remain in town after what had happened, he resolved to send her immediately into the country, and was just returned from hiring a post-chaise for that purpose. The reason he gave for his proceeding in this manner, was as follows—'She can-'not remain here, and be shut up, she 'must

'must appear sometimes; and who can 'tell but that in some unlucky minute 'she may be seen by the very villain 'who has ruined her, and who, either 'through curiosity, or the desire of re-'newing the gratification of his vicious 'flame, may discover whose wife she is, 'and wherever he sees me, point me to 'his lewd companions for the wretch he 'has made me!'

I had nothing to offer in opposition to what he said on this score, for indeed I thought it very proper they should both retire into the country; so replied, that I was glad I had called that morning, otherwise I should not have had the opportunity of wishing them a good journey: to which he hastily rejoined—'I 'shall not go.'—'How!' cried I, somewhat surprized, 'do you send away Ma-'tilda, and stay behind yourself!' A deep sigh was the first answer he gave; but the testimony of his discontent was presently succeeded by these words—'Yes, my friend, she must go without 'me: two days ago, nothing was so pre-'cious to me as her presence; I lived, 'indeed, but in her sight; every glance, 'every look she gave me, shot pleasure to 'my heart; but now, alas! those happy 'moments are fled, and I can regard 'her as no other than the ruined reliques 'of the woman once so dear to me!'

It was in vain I represented to him, that as I doubted not but he was perfectly convinced of the purity of Matilda's mind, he ought not to love her less for the violence her person had sustained: he owned the justness of my reasons, but could not prevail on himself to be governed by them; and when I urged the cruelty of sending her so long a journey without any companion to alleviate her sorrows, he made me this reply—'She does not go alone; her waiting-'maid, who, soon after our arrival in 'town, was obliged to be removed on 'account of the small-pox, is now quite 'recovered, and came home last night: 'this girl has attended Matilda for 'some years, and I know will be very 'careful of her.'

While we were discoursing, the chaise came to the door; on which Alexis called to have the luggage put in, and his wife to make herself ready. I asked him if he thought it proper I should take my leave of Matilda before her departure; he replied, that it was a ceremony which he believed she would gladly be dispensed with from receiving, in her present unhappy situation; but begged I would stay in the dining-room till he had dispatched this disagreeable affair. With these words he went out of the room, and I remained where I was. In less than half a quarter of an hour, looking through the window, I saw the disconsolate Matilda go out of the house, supported on one side by Alexis, and on the other by her attendant. I could not see her face; but her motions, and the distracted air with which she threw herself into the chaise, were enough to convince me of the extreme wretchedness of her condition.

Alexis returned to me in a situation little less pity-moving, yet could not my heart altogether absolve him for this last part of his behaviour to Matilda: it was now, however, a time to apply rather balms than corrosives to his bleeding and despairing mind; I therefore said every thing in my power to administer consolation to him, but all my endeavours that way were unsuccessful; and though I staid with him the greatest part of the day, had the mortification to leave him as I found him.

Oh! had the dark unknown beheld the sad effects his wild inordinate desires produced, he surely could not have sustained the shock, but must have revenged upon himself the mischiefs he had brought upon two worthy persons, so lately blessed, so truly loving and beloved!

CHAP. III.

CONSISTS OF SOME FARTHER PARTICULARS RELATIVE TO THE PRECEDING ADVENTURE; WITH TWO LETTERS WROTE BY THAT UNFORTUNATE LADY TO HER HUSBAND IN HER EXILE.

I Am very much afraid that Alexis will stand but little justified in the opinion of my fair readers for his conduct towards Matilda; they will doubtless say, that the love he pretended to have for her had taken but a shallow root in his heart, when it could be shaken by a misfortune which she had no way contributed to bring upon herself. They will, perhaps, also add, that after she had with so much simplicity, some may think folly too, revealed to him the whole of what

what had befallen her, it was not only unkind, but highly ungenerous and cruel in him to abandon her to despair, at a time when she had so much need of the tenderest compassion and consolation.

I must confess, indeed, that these accusations have the strongest appearance of reason on their side; yet I must take upon me, notwithstanding, to aver, that how much a paradox soever it may seem to some, Love, when in excess, may, on more occasions than one, produce the same effects as hate. Certain it is, that it was chiefly owing to the too refined delicacy of the passion Alexis was possessed of for Matilda, that made them both so greatly wretched; the thoughts that another, though by force, had revelled in her charms, deprived those charms of all their relish, and sickened every wish. When we have been talking together on this head, often have I heard him, in the utmost bitterness of heart, express himself in these terms—'I still adore her mind; I know it is 'all composed of sweetness, innocence, 'and truth; but, oh! the blemish cast 'upon her person cannot be washed 'off but with the villain's blood; and, 'unless fate allows me the means of 'doing her and myself that justice, can 'never look upon her but as the ghost 'of my once dear wife!'

Finding, that to prevail on him to live with Matilda as a wife, was utterly impracticable, at least till time had a little mellowed the asperity of his resentment, I forbore any farther speech on that head, believing, that if a change in Matilda's favour should ever happen, it must come wholly of himself, and not by the arguments of another.

It will be easy for the reader to judge of how little efficacy the persuasions of any friend could be to move him, when those of the tender, the endearing, the so lately adored Matilda, proved in vain; which abundantly appear by the many letters she sent to him after her retirement, two only of which I got an opportunity of transcribing: the first was wrote immediately on her arrival at their country seat.

'MY DEAR, DEAR ALEXIS!

'I Am a sufficient proof, that grief is 'not so fatal as some people would 'represent it, since I live to tell you I am 'safely arrived at ********. Yes, I 'am returned to that once blissful scene 'of soft delights, of pure and virtuous 'love. But, oh! that Heaven is fled, 'a sad reverse supplies it's place; and 'wheresoever I turn my eyes, horrors 'instead of joys rise to my distracted 'view! I remember, that when you 'turned me from you, your last words 'were—"Be comforted, Matilda." 'Alas! you well know, without Alexis 'there is no comfort for Matilda; your 'presence is the only balsam can assuage 'the tortures of my agonizing heart! 'If then, indeed, you wish me less the 'wretch I am, let me not linger long in 'a banishment more cruel than death! 'Quit that detested town, fly to my relief, and at least join with me in bewailing what is past a remedy.

'But, oh! I have too much cause to 'fear you have withdrawn all your affection from me, and am doubly miserable in a consciousness of being 'rendered unworthy to retain it. Yet, 'had sickness, or any other accident, deprived me of that little beauty nature 'has bestowed upon me, and made me 'become lame, or blind, or crooked, I 'flatter myself you would have loved 'me still; you would then have pitied 'and cherished me in your bosom; and 'sure, the misfortune that has befallen 'me, was as far removed from my seeking, 'as any of those I have mentioned. I will 'not, however, anticipate the doom I 'so much dread; will not give way to 'apprehensions distracting to myself, and 'I hope injurious to you. I know you 'are generous and just, and will endeavour to assure myself those noble principles, even without the aid of tenderness, will not permit you to hate me, 'to throw me off for ever, for my person having sustained a violence, to 'which I am persuaded you are convinced my mind was incapable of consenting. I will believe that you feel 'all my woes, participate in my anguish, 'and that my pen ought rather to flow 'with words of consolation than reproach. Yet, if it is ordained that 'we must both be wretched, let us be 'wretched together; let us mingle our 'tears, and interchangeably echo back 'each other's sighs; let us indulge despair; recal the memory of those blissful hours we once enjoyed; compare 'the present with the past, and join in 'curses on the base, the inhuman author 'of our woes!—But whither does my in-

'considerate

'considerate passion lead me! Does it 'become the love, the tenderness, the 'duty, of a wife, to wish you should 'partake my ruin? No; since I can 'no longer contribute to your happi-'ness, rather forget, renounce, aban-'don me for ever! Yet, oh! 'tis hard! '—My brain grows wild on the re-'flection—I can proceed no farther. 'Pity me, my most dear, my most adored 'Alexis! Pity, O pity, the undone, 'the lost,

'MATILDA!

'P. S. If these distracting lines have 'any power to move you, if any 'remains of soft compassion to-'wards me still dwell within your 'breast, write to me by the first 'post. Fix, I beseech you, my 'uncertain fate. Oh, that I should 'live to stand in need of intreaties 'to hear from you!'

When Alexis shewed me the above, he seemed all dissolved in a flood of love and tenderness; yet I believe the answer he sent to it was dictated in terms not altogether so satisfactory to Matilda as the present disturbance of her mind required. Here follows the second melancholy epistle of that unfortunate lady.

'My for ever dear, tho' unkind ALEXIS,

'WITH what anxiety have I watched 'the arrival of the post! how 'counted the tedious minutes as they 'glided on! how trembled between 'hope and fear on every knock given at 'the gate, while in expectation of a 'letter from you! At last it came; 'but, oh! I am not more at ease! 'Wherefore, Alexis, do you keep me 'in this cruel suspence? I asked no 'impossibilities of you, desired you not 'to love me still; I only begged the de-'cision of my fate; and, sure, that is 'not a request too much for me to 'make, or you to grant!

'My father, uncles, all my kindred 'and acquaintance, nay, our very ser-'vants, stand amazed to see me here 'without you; they perceive my altered 'looks; and, with officious love, en-'quire into the cause. All the answer 'I can make is, that the air of London 'not agreeing with my constitution, I 'hurried back before some business you 'had in town would permit you to re-'turn. These excuses may pass current 'for a time, but cannot do so long; I 'conjure you, therefore, by all you have 'to hope, or fear, or wish, not to ex-'pose yourself and me to conjectures 'which cannot be to the advantage of 'either of our characters. Pronounce 'my doom; say that you will return, 'and live with me, in all appearance, 'as before, or scruple not to let me 'know you have resolved on an eternal 'separation; that I may retire, at once, 'to some dark corner of the world, and 'shut myself up from pity and con-'tempt. I know this ought to have 'been thought upon before you obliged 'me to remove from London; but both 'of us were in too much confusion, at 'the time of parting, to give our cooler 'reason room to operate. We have 'since, however, had leisure to reflect on 'what was proper to be done in our un-'happy circumstances; and I flatter 'myself you will not think me too pre-'suming in being the first to mention it.

'O, Alexis! imagine not that, when 'I urge you to this eclaircissement, I 'am so vain as to soothe my fond heart 'with a belief, that since the dreadful 'accident you ever can love me as be-'fore; no, I rather expect my sentence 'will be that of an everlasting banish-'ment: perhaps it is already signed 'within your breast, and the compassion 'you have for me alone delays the exe-'cution. If this should be the case, 'throw aside that cruel mercy which 'conceals it. Grief and despair have 'given me fortitude to bear the worst 'of ills, and sure there can be none 'half so dreadful to me as seeing you 'no more! So much the better for my 'eternal peace, as it will the sooner rid 'me of the burden of a hated life. But 'I will trouble you no more than to re-'new my petition of knowing, in your 'next letter, what it is you have in ef-'fect decreed for the innocently cri-'minal

'MATILDA.

'P. S. Your old acquaintance and 'fellow collegian, Mr. L——, 'has just now sent to enquire when 'you are expected down. He de-'signs, it seems, to set up, at the next 'general election, for the borough 'of *******, and greatly depends 'on the interest you have in that 'place.

'place. I ſuppoſe you will ſhortly
'receive a letter from himſelf on
'the occaſion. O may the calls
'of friendſhip give weight to thoſe
'I have mentioned, and influence
'you to return!'

I happened to be with Alexis at the time of his receiving this. He firſt read it to himſelf, then communicated it to me; and, when he had finiſhed, cried out, with an extraordinary emotion—'Poor Matilda! unhappy, charming 'woman! with what enchanting elo-'quence does ſhe plead againſt herſelf! 'how ſweetly labour to oppoſe what ſhe 'moſt wiſhes to obtain!'

As I found the ſtrongeſt reaſon in the arguments urged in Matilda's letter, I muſt confeſs that I was at a loſs to comprehend what he meant by ſpeaking in this manner; therefore deſired he would explain himſelf, which he immediately did, in theſe terms—'O friend! the 'more I diſcover of her merit, the leſs 'I am able to forget the violation of 'her honour! I muſt ceaſe to love her 'as I do, muſt bring myſelf to look 'upon her with the ſame indifference 'that moſt huſbands do upon their 'wives, before I can ſupport, with 'any tolerable degree of patience, the 'thoughts that another has poſſeſſed 'her.' Thus did he always talk whenever we were alone; and had Matilda known his ſentiments, I believe it would be a moot point whether ſhe would not rather have choſe a ſeparation than to live with him, after he had reduced himſelf to ſuch a ſtate of inſenſibility.

He now, indeed, began to give great indications that he had nothing more at heart than to loſe all remembrance, not only of the injury done to Matilda, but of herſelf alſo. By very ſwift degrees he became the reverſe of what he was before his going to that fatal maſquerade. The pleaſures of the bottle, and the converſation of the looſer part of womankind, divide too much of his time between them; and he ſeeks in riots and debaucheries his relief from melancholy. I am told, however, that he is at preſent preparing to ſet out for*****: but what ſatisfaction can the virtuous Matilda receive from his return, thus transformed, thus debaſed in morals and behaviour, from the man ſhe had ſo dearly loved, and who was once ſo worthy her eſteem?

How ſad a reverſe has a few weeks made in the condition of this lately happy pair! Surely the wretch—for ſo I muſt call him, be he of what degree or rank ſoever—who, for the ſake of gratifying the fleeting pleaſure of a moment, has brought this ruin on them, ought never to be forgiven in this world, whatever a ſincere contrition, if he is capable of it, may entitle him to in the next!

CHAP. IV.

THE AUTHOR HAVING FOUND SOMETHING IN HIS RAMBLES WHICH HE SUPPOSES MAY BE OF VALUE TO THE OWNER, CONDESCENDS TO TAKE UPON HIM THE OFFICE OF A TOWN-CRIER, BUT WAVES THE CEREMONY OF THE GREAT O YES.

HAPPENING one morning to wake more early than ordinary, I quitted my bed; and the weather being fine, and my humour more inclined to ſerioufneſs than gaiety, I took a little walk into Hyde Park, not with the leaſt expectation of making any diſcovery of other people's affairs, but merely to think of my own with more liberty than I could do at home. I met no living creature in my way, except ſome birds that perched upon the twigs of the leafleſs trees, and in melodious notes chanted forth praiſes to the approaching ſpring. Theſe rather indulging meditation, I paſſed ſlowly on by the ſide of the Serpentine River; where my eyes were attracted with the ſight of a white ſattin pocket lying juſt before me. I ſuppoſe it might have been dropped from ſome lady's ſide the night before; for, on my taking it up, I found it extremely damp with dew. I looked upon this as a lawful prize, and that I had a right to keep it, at leaſt till I could find ſomebody that had a better title; I therefore tied it up in my handkerchief, and, after having finiſhed my walk, took it home with me, where my impatience did not ſuffer me to continue long without examining it. I ſhall give a faithful inventory of all the particulars, reſerving only one in petto, in order to prevent being impoſed upon by any fictitious claimant.

Money being the chief idol of mankind,

kind, I shall give that the preference, and begin with the purse, which had in it five gold ducats, a leaden French shilling, a bent half-crown, and a medal of the Duke of Cumberland in copper, very curious, but by some accident had been cracked, and the impression in several parts pretty much erased. The next thing that presented itself was a very small pocket-book; which I shall forbear to describe, as well as make any mention of the memorandums it contained, to any person in the world but to the lady who wrote and shall come to demand them. There was also a chrystal smelling-bottle half full of sal armoniac, a tortoise-shell snuff-box rimmed with gold, and a naked Venus painted on the inside.

But the most valuable part of this cargo, at least according to my opinion, was some papers; not Bank-bills, but letters, and other writings, more deserving the attention of the publick, and which I shall make no scruple to insert, as they gradually fell under my inspection; especially as all of them having been sent under covers, which were not in the packet, the name of the lady to whom they were directed can only be guessed at.

LETTER I.

'MADAM,

'I Now send you the catalogue you 'have so often requested; but in-'treat you will be so good as not to let 'any one soul in the world know you 'had it from him who has the honour 'to be, with the greatest respect, &c.'

The name subscribed to this had been torn off, either by design or accident; but the paper which accompanied it was perfect and entire. Here follows a faithful transcript.

A CATALOGUE OF SOME VERY SCARCE AND CURIOUS PIECES, IN PROSE AND VERSE: ALL WROTE BY SOME OF THE MOST EMINENT HANDS.

1. THE Art of Pleasing in Conversation. An Heroick Poem. By the E— of C——.

2. An Essay on Power. Wrote originally in High Dutch, and now translated by a person of distinction into English. Bound in red Turkey, finely gilt and lettered.

3. The Virtues of Carmine, with a Recipe how to prepare it with success. *Probatum est.* By the C—— of C——. Gilt back, and lettered.

4. Patient Grizel. A Poem in Six Cantos. By the real C—— of C——. Bound in calf, very plain.

5. The Politician Defeated. A Novel. In Three Parts. By the E—— of E——. Stitched in blue paper.

6. The Croaker. A Tragi-comical Farce of One Act. By L—— R——.

7. Cookery Improved, after the Epicurean Stile. By a Club of Gentlemen. In sheets.

8. The Chaste Maid; or, A New Way to Amuse the Town. A Comedy of Three Acts, each sufficient for a Winter Night's Entertainment. By the facetious H—— F——, Esq.

9. Rules to Chuse a Wife; shewing the Absurdity of all those generally observed. By Sir J—— C——. In boards.

10. A Philosophical Definition of Card Craft, upwards of Forty Years compiling. By the very learned and most ingenious Professor Mr. H——e. Stitched in gilt paper.

11. Frugality. A Poem. In Nine Cantos. By the C—— of B——. Bound in vellum.

12. A Collection of Jests and Merry Phrases, to keep Young People's Heads from Aching with more laborious Studies. By a Tutor in the Modish Sciences. Finely bound in blue Turkey, gilt back, and lettered.

13. Try before you Buy. A Poem after the Manner of Hudibras. By the E—— of R——. In boards.

14. The Charms of Novelty. A Pindarick Essay. By Miss C——. In sheets.

15. The Pleasures of Matrimony; or, Who would not be a Husband? A Farce. By L—— V——. Stitched, and very much sullied with often reading.

16. A Dissertation on Flies Eggs. By the President of a learned Society. In boards.

17. Laugh and Lie Down. A Ballad Opera of Three Acts. By L—— P——. Stitched in blue paper.

18. An Essay to prove that True Honour is always concomitant with

Good Sense. By the E—— of O——. Bound in plain blue Turkey.

19. Conjugal Love. A Pastoral of One continued Scene. By the E—— of N——. Printed on a new Elzevir letter, and neatly bound, without tawdriness or affectation.

20. The Patriot. A Secret History. By G—— D——, Esq. Bound in clouded calf.

21. The Double Dealer; or, The Westminster Disappointment. A Farce of Two Acts. By Sir G—— V——. Stitched in cap paper.

22. An Eulogy on Apostacy. By L—— G——. Bound in calf, and gilt back.

23. Love in a Bottle. A Poem, in Three Cantos. By the E—— of M——. Stitched in blue paper.

24. Redivivus; or, Old Age and Gallantry Reconciled. A Humorous Farce, of One Act. By the E—— of H——. Stitched.

25. An Exhortation to Hospitality to Foreigners, even though it should happen to be destructive to the Liberties of the Natives. By L—— T——, as he delivered it at the Haymarket. Bound in the French taste.

26. Criticisms on the Play of Rule a Wife and Have a Wife. By L—— P——. In boards.

27. The Fox Weary of Goose Hunting. A Fable. By the D—— of D——. Bound in parchment.

28. The Lover's Catechism. A New Ballad. By the celebrated Miss A——.

29. An Infallible Remedy for Curing the Scotch Itch without Bleeding. By the D—— of A——.

30. The Beauties of Domestick Life, illustrated with Examples. A Pastoral Eclogue. By the D—— of B——. Neatly bound.

31. Love Levels All; or, a Lucky Trip to Bath. An Epic Poem, without any Episodes. By C—— B——. Printed on a half worn-out letter, but very richly bound.

32. Instructions for a Supplement to Arthur Collins's Peerage of England. By L—— L——. Stitched in marble paper.

33. Verses in Praise of Breeding. By Miss W——.

34. True Magnificence. An Heroick Poem. By the D—— of M——. Finely bound.

35. Love in a Coach. A True Secret History. By C—— V——. Stitched.

36. Second Thoughts Best. A Philosophical Treatise, dedicated to a Brother of the Horn. By Mr. W——. Bound in sheeps-skin.

37. The Triumvirate of Converts. Being a Series of Epistles on Moral and Religious Subjects, which passed between L—— T——, C—— G——, and Mrs. C——. In boards.

38. The Escape. A Satire. Inscribed to L—— D—— M——, by a Well-wisher to her Ladyship.

39. A Letter sent with a Side of Venison to the celebrated Mrs. J—— D——, in the Piazza, Covent Garden. By L—— T——e.

40. A Short Treatise concerning Publick and Private Charities; proving to a Demonstration, that the former are of much more Emolument to the Giver than the latter. By L—— E—— J——. Curiously bound, with a Register.

41. The Humiliation. A Poem. Addressed to the Inexorables. By L—— G—— S——. Stitched.

42. A Prophecy that Votes for Members of Parliament will fall to no Price at the next Westminster Election. By Sir W—— Y——.

Having folded and replaced this paper in the pocket whence I had taken it, I proceeded to the other.

LETTER II.

'DEAR MADAM,

'IT must be confessed you are endowed with a courage and resolution superior to what most of your sex can boast of; but you must give me leave to say, at the same time, that in these affairs we men run much the greatest hazards: in case of a discovery, our persons are liable to fall a sacrifice to the resentment of an injured husband, and our fortunes sure to be ruined by way of reparation of his disgrace; whereas the worst you have to fear is a divorce. The laws are favourable to wives; the portion you brought with you is either returned, or an annuity equivalent: and as for the little shame you sustain by such a procedure, it is well atoned for by

your

'your being freed from the loathsome 'caresses of the man you hate, and at 'full liberty to pursue your inclinations 'with him you love. Be assured, Madam, I would venture much for the 'continuance of the blessing you permit 'me to enjoy; but I find the intercourse 'between us begins to be suspected, and 'you must therefore pardon me that I 'yield to necessity, and refrain any farther meetings with you, at least for 'the present. I was yesterday at court, 'and heard some whispers, that your 'jealous coxcomb would soon be sent 'abroad: if such a thing should happen, 'as I have some pretty good reasons to 'believe it will, I shall return with double transport to your embraces; till 'then, prudence obliges me to deny 'myself that happiness. But at how 'great a distance soever I keep my person, I beg you will do me the justice 'to believe my heart is always with 'you; and that I can never cease to be, 'with the greatest sincerity, &c.

'PHILETES.'

'P. S. I would not have you harbour any unjust suspicions either 'of me or your fair friend; for, 'upon my soul! I never had the 'least design upon her in the way 'you mean; and you will find, 'whenever it is convenient for me 'to renew my devoirs to you, that 'I like no woman better than your'self. Once more I bid you unwillingly adieu.'

LETTER III.

'DEAR CREATURE,

'YOUR Damon, and my Strephon, 'as we call them, are both with 'me. They have found out the most 'charming place that ever was for us to 'scamper to, whenever we can delude 'the eyes of our impertinent gaolers. 'If you can find any excuse to get 'loose from yours, the rendezvous agreed 'upon is the banks of the Serpentine 'River, just after sun-set, whence we 'are to follow our leaders where they 'shall please to conduct us. Lady 'Fillup has a route to-night; you may 'tell your tyrant you are going there. 'But why should I put pretences into 'a head so much more fertile than my 'own? Fail not to come, however, if 'it be not a thing utterly impossible for 'human wit to accomplish: but let us 'know your resolution by the bearer. 'I am, &c.

'CORINNA.

'P. S. While I was writing the 'above, Damon, to shew either 'his love or wit, or both, took up 'a pen, and employed it in the enclosed.'

"TO MY SOUL'S TREASURE.

"FLY, charmer, fly! leave homebred
"cares behind;
"With thoughts of coming joys fill all
"your mind:
"Let smiling pleasure wanton o'er your
"face,
"And kindling transports brighten ev'ry
"grace.
"Each vein of mine beats high with love's
"alarms;
"Haste, then, and lull me gently in your
"arms!"

"I know I am a bad poet, but you "will find me a better lover, and that "your charms are capable of inspiring "me with more fire than all the ladies "of Parnassus put together. I am, &c.

"DAMON."

The letter of Philetes, and that of Corinna and Damon, being dated on the same day, discovered to me that the lady who received them was not quite inconsolable for the loss of one lover, as she had another in store; and also that she failed not to comply with the invitation of Damon, and that she had dropped her pocket at the rendezvous appointed by Corinna.

I make no question but that the inquisitive reader would be glad to know the name and rank of this so much admired lady; but as I can do no more, at most, than guess at either, I should be loth to impose my bare and uncertain conjectures upon the publick, for fear of a mistake, and being guilty of the worst of wrongs, that of prejudicing the character of an innocent person. I wish every one would pay as much regard as myself to what Shakespeare says on this occasion—

'Good name, in man or woman,
'Is the immediate jewel of our souls.
'Who steals my purse, steals trash; 'tis
'something, nothing;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave
'to thousands;
'But he that filches from me my good
'name,
'Robs me of that which not enriches him,
'And makes me poor indeed.'

Could I have formed even the most distant supposition to what place Strephon and Damon had conducted their ladies, I doubt not but my curiosity would have carried me thither, where my enquiries might perhaps have gained me the satisfaction of knowing how much of the night these inamoratos had passed together, and in what manner they had been entertained; but no mention being made of any thing farther than the place where they were to meet, I was obliged to content myself with what discoveries I had made, and so must the reader also.

I cannot conclude this chapter without an observation which has constantly occurred to me whenever any thing fell in my way of the kind I have been relating, which is this. As the wife has the honour of her husband in keeping, it seems to me a most ungenerous and cruel addition to the crime of wronging his bed, when by publick indiscretions she exposes him to that contempt and ridicule which the world, though without the least shadow of reason or justice, is always sure to cast upon the husband of a transgressing wife.

I know very well people are apt to say, that when a woman abandons herself to vice, she presently becomes utterly incapable of paying any regard to her own reputation, much less to that of her husband; and that it appears a much greater matter of surprize when they see women, as it must be confessed many such there are, who, without being criminal in fact, behave in such a manner as to draw on themselves the severest censures. Though I must allow that this too frequently happens, yet I cannot agree in opinion with those who seem to wonder it should be so, and look upon it as a kind of inconsistency in nature; I rather imagine that guilt is more likely to inspire circumspection. A woman who knows herself culpable, I should expect to be very careful not to do any thing in publick that might cause suspicion of her being less reserved in private; whereas a consciousness of innocence, especially in a thoughtless disposition, may easily render a woman unguarded, and less observant of those decorums which, though not essential to virtue, are doubtless necessary to reputation.

CHAP. V.

TURNS CHIEFLY UPON THE SUBJECT OF EDUCATION, AND CONTAINS SOME THINGS WHICH THE AUTHOR IS APPREHENSIVE WILL NOT BE VERY AGREEABLE TO THE FEMALE PART OF HIS READERS.

THE good or the ill fortune of our whole lives chiefly depends on the first bent given to our minds in youth. Impressions made in our early years take a deep root within us, grow up with us to maturity, become part of ourselves; so that they may properly be called a second nature, and are seldom, if ever, totally eradicated. According to one of our English poets—

'Children, like tender osiers, take the bow;
'And, as they first are fashion'd, still will
'grow.'

For this reason it is that parents, unless they are very remiss indeed, take so much pride in the education of their children, bestowing on them every accomplishment befitting their rank and circumstances, and oftentimes more than will well agree with either. Yet all this will not do; there are some previous steps to be taken, without which all the improvements we can make, from the lessons of the most able masters, will never render us worthy the esteem of others, or truly happy in ourselves, for any length of time. Pride, and an impatience of controul, are the first propensities discoverable in human nature: if these are humoured and indulged in their beginnings, which is indeed in our most early years, they will soon become too headstrong and too turbulent to be afterwards restrained and subjected to the government of reason by any methods whatever that can be taken for

that

that purpoſe; the firſt indications ſhould therefore be carefully watched, and checked in every inſtance.

I ſmile to think what objections are commonly made, by ſome over-fond parents, to ſuch a manner of proceeding. If I am not miſtaken, theſe two are the principal: that to curb children too much is apt to break their ſpirits; and that the world being ſo full of diſappointments, few people eſcape them when they come to maturity, it is pity the poor things ſhould know ſorrow before their time. To both which I take the liberty to make this reply—

Firſt, as to what they call the breaking of the ſpirit. That due decorum I would recommend, takes no more of the ſpirit from the young Maſter or Miſs than what is neceſſary to keep them from running into thoſe follies and exceſſes which, how excuſeable ſoever in childhood, render them contemptible in riper years; as the ſkilful gardener lops from his tender plant thoſe ſuperfluous branches which, if ſuffered to continue, would hinder it from growing to perfection. Then, as to the ſecond, every one knows the ſorrows their little hearts are capable of feeling make no laſting impreſſion on them; they will cry one moment, and laugh the next. The contradiction they meet with will only make them ſenſible that they neither can nor ought to expect they are to have their will in all things; and the trifling diſappointments given them, will enable them to ſuſtain with fortitude thoſe of more conſequence, which may hereafter poſſibly befal them. A boy is leſs liable to the danger of being ſpoiled by too much indulgence than a girl; becauſe he is no ſooner taken from the nurſery, than he is either put out to ſchool, or, if of a ſuperior rank, under the inſpection of a tutor.

I have the honour to be pretty nearly related, by marriage, to Lady Plyant; her late huſband being my firſt couſin. Decency obliges me to viſit the widow ſometimes: ſhe is a very affable, good-natured woman; and has, indeed, a greater ſhare of underſtanding than her too great compliance with the cuſtoms of the age will permit her to make ſhew of. She keeps a prodigious deal of company, for which reaſon I ſee her much leſs frequently than otherwiſe I ſhould do; but happening to paſs by her houſe one day when no coach or chair was in waiting there, I ventured to knock at the door, and was glad to be told ſhe was alone. I had not, however, been with her above ten minutes, before two or three loud raps proclaimed the approach of ſome new gueſt, and preſently after a grave elderly lady was introduced. Lady Plyant received her with much politeneſs, and a great ſhew of friendſhip; and, after the firſt ſalutations were over, and we had re-ſeated ourſelves, ſaid to her—

Lady Plyant. Dear Mrs. Loyter, I have not ſeen you this age, and have been quite unhappy in the want of you.

Mrs. Loyter. Dear Lady Plyant, the loſs is wholly mine. But I have been ſo embarraſſed—my poor girl has been extremely indiſpoſed.

Lady Plyant. Bleſs me! Miſs not well, and I hear nothing of it! But I hope ſhe is better?

Mrs. Loyter. Perfectly recovered, Madam. She will have the honour of waiting on your ladyſhip this evening. She is gone to make a few viſits, but prayed heartily to find nobody at home, that ſhe might follow me here the ſooner.

Lady Plyant. How perfectly kind that was! Well, ſhe is a charming creature; you are the happieſt woman in the world in having ſuch a daughter. I proteſt, among all my acquaintance, I do not know any young lady that comes up to her; there is ſomething ſo ſweet, ſo engaging, in every thing ſhe does.

Mrs. Loyter. She is infinitely obliged to your ladyſhip. Indeed, I have taken a great deal of pains with her; for, as I have no other daughter, I ſhould never have forgiven myſelf if I had not uſed my utmoſt endeavours to form her mind ſo as to make her as agreeable as poſſible to her acquaintance.

Lady Plyant. Oh, Madam, the world muſt allow you have; Miſs is the darling of every body that knows her.

Mrs. Loyter. The girl has a great deal of good-nature, Madam, and does not want a genius and capacity to mingle in converſation on almoſt any ſubject becoming a young lady to be acquainted with.—

I had been upon the wing to take my flight almoſt from the moment Mrs. Loyter came in; but what was ſaid in relation to her daughter determined me to ſtay till Miſs arrived, in order to be convinced how far her perſon and behaviour correſponded with the high character

facter which had been given of her. At length Miſs Loyter appeared, and I ſtretched my eyelids to their full extent, to take in all the charms I had heard ſhe was poſſeſſed of. The girl, indeed, was well enough; but I could diſcover nothing extraordinary about her, nor did her eyes or air give any indications of that capacity her mother ſeemed to boaſt of; but as I thought it unfair to give a verdict on mere appearances, I ſuſpended my judgment on her underſtanding till I had more ſubſtantial proofs.

The diſcourſe at firſt was only on where ſhe had been, who ſhe had ſeen, and how ſuch and ſuch a lady was dreſſed. I found Miſs talked very learnedly on this ſubject, and therefore was not without hope of hearing ſomething from her equally lively on others of more importance; but none being ſtarted, I was compelled to liſten to the ſeveral animadverſions made by theſe three ladies on caps, flounces, and ſuch like. At laſt, Miſs happening to ſay that ſhe had met Mrs. O—— in one of the viſits ſhe had been making, I preſently catched up the word, and ſaid to her—'Then, Madam, I 'doubt not but ſome converſation paſſed 'which you will do us the favour to re-'peat, as the lady you mention is per-'fectly acquainted with publick affairs, 'and indeed reaſons on them very juſtly.' To which ſhe replied—'So they ſay, Sir; 'but ſhe was juſt going out when I came 'in; and indeed I was heartily glad of 'it, for I hate to hear a deal of ſtuff 'about things I know nothing of.' As I had a good ſhare in the enſuing part of this converſation, I ſhall, to avoid confuſion, repeat my own words as if ſpoke by another perſon.

Author. Then, Madam, you have no reliſh for politicks?

Miſs. No truly, Sir. What buſineſs have I with the tranſactions of kings, and princes, and parliaments? It makes me ſick to hear ſo much of wars, and treaties, and conventions, and taxes, and grievances, and ſuch nonſenſe.

Author. I muſt confeſs, Madam, the affairs of Europe are a little intricate at preſent, and may be puzzling to a lady's comprehenſion; but I ſuppoſe you are not unacquainted with the hiſtories of former times.

Miſs. Lord, Sir, what have I to do with former times?

Author. Every one, Madam, has to do with the annals of the country they were born in.

Mrs. Loyter. Theſe things are quite out of my daughter's way; but for all that, I can aſſure you, Sir, ſhe reads a great deal.

Author. It would be a pity, indeed, Madam, ſo fine a young lady ſhould be altogether ignorant of books. I imagine, therefore, that Miſs's genius ſoars to a higher pitch, the wonders of the creation; I make no queſtion but ſhe has read Le Spectacle de la Nature.

Mrs. Loyter. I believe not, Sir.—Have you, my dear?

Miſs. Not I, truly; but I have heard enough of it. They ſay there are four volumes of it taken up with nothing but a deſcription of trees, birds, beaſts, fiſhes, and naſty inſects.

Author. What do you think, Madam, of Fontenelle's Plurality of Worlds?

Miſs. O hang it, I was never ſo diſappointed in my life; I thought by the beginning, when I found a gentleman and lady were taking their walk together by moon-light, ſome pretty adventure would have enſued; but, good God! the author has made them talk of nothing but planets, and the things that happen in the ſky.

Author. I fancy, then, Miſs, romances and novels are chiefly your taſte.

Miſs. I hate romances, they are too tedious; as for novels, I like ſome of them well enough, particularly Mrs. Behn's: but I know not how it is, the authors now-a-days have got ſuch a way of breaking off in the middle of their ſtories, that one forgets one half before one comes to the other.

Author. Digreſſions, Miſs, when they contain fine ſentiments and judicious remarks, are certainly the moſt valuable parts of that ſort of writing.

Miſs. I cannot think ſo; and I could wiſh the authors would keep their ſentiments and remarks to themſelves, or elſe have them printed in a different letter, that one might know when to begin and when to leave off.

Author. I preſume, Miſs, you are fond of poetry?

Miſs. Not very fond; I can't ſay I ever read much of it.—

I thought I had now ſufficiently ſounded the genius and capacity of this young lady; therefore ceaſed to engroſs her any longer to myſelf, and ſoon after took my

my leave, secretly wondering at the strange partiality of Mrs. Loyter, in regard both of herself and daughter. A few hours, however, made me begin to judge somewhat more favourably of these ladies. 'Though Mrs. Loyter,' said I within myself, 'is mistaken in believing 'she has been able to make her daughter pass for a wit, her endeavours, notwithstanding, may have had better success in other accomplishments more 'essential to her happiness; she may have 'made her a good œconomist, and perfectly acquainted with every thing requisite for the well managing a family.'

I had the more reason to imagine that this young lady was trained up in frugality and good housewifery, as I had been told, that Mr. Loyter lived to the height of his income; that he saved no money; had several sons, the eldest of whom, after his decease, was to run away with the estate; so that it could not be expected the daughter would have any fortune to entitle her to a husband at all suitable to the appearance she made. But, as I was always willing to be convinced whether my conjectures were right or wrong, I resolved to make an Invisible Visit to this family. Just as I came to the house, Mr. Loyter was going out, and the door being opened for him, I slipped in, and went up stairs. The old lady was sitting in the dining-room window with her spectacles on, very hard at work. Breakfast was but just over, as I found by the maid's removing the tea-equipage; and Miss was gone up to dress, it seems, for she came down presently after in the same form I had seen her at Lady Plyant's: she ran directly to the great glass, in order to examine how her petticoats hung at the bottom; and then turned to her mother, and seeing what she was about, said to her—

Miss. Lord, mamma, have you not done mending my tippet yet!

Mrs. Loyter. Indeed, my dear, it is past mending; you have torn the lace in twenty places, I believe, with those ugly pins in your stomacher; I wish you would take more care of your things.

Miss. Indeed I can't be a slave to my cloaths.

Mrs. Loyter. I would not have you, my dear; but this vexes me, because it is the only handsome tippet you have. You must e'en try to coax your father to give you a couple of pieces to buy you another, the first time you find him in a good humour; for I assure you I have not a single guinea in the world.

Miss. Well, 'tis a shameful thing one has not money enough without asking for, when one has a fancy to any thing. But, mamma, can nothing be done with this lace?

Mrs. Loyter. It will never make up again in the shape it is; but I believe I may contrive to make a handsome tucker of it.

Miss. Oh, I shall like a tucker of it vastly. Pray, mamma, do it as soon as you can.

Mrs. Loyter. Where are you going, my dear?

Miss. I am only going to the next street to Lady Lovetoy's, to ask if Miss will take a walk with me in the Park.

Mrs. Loyter. Do not stay too long; your father brings company home to-day, and we are to have a great dinner. Mr. Blossom, and his son just come from the university, are to be here, so I would not have you out of the way for the world; who can tell what may happen?

Miss. Oh, why did not I know that sooner? I would have had on my new gauze cap; but, 'tis no matter, I will come home time enough to change it.

With these words she snatched up her little muff, and galloped down stairs, leaving her poor mother poring over the breaches she had undertaken to rectify.

Methinks I hear how heartily the gay and witty part of my readers will laugh at the character of Miss Loyter; they will certainly look upon her as a stalking, staring, stupid, noteless creature; a moving piece of mere matter, uninformed by any soul or spirit, wholly incapable of deserving praise, and equally insensible of contempt. 'Tis true she appears so, yet may it not be owing so much to any deficiency of nature in her, as to the mistaken fondness of a mother, who, fearing to give her a moment's discontent, neglected to rouze the native sluggishness of her faculties by any exercise or employment.

What therefore can be expected from a young person bred in a supine indolence, accustomed to have her will in every thing, and scarce taught the difference between good and evil; but that she should, all her life, act as chance, or as her own undistinguishing fancy shall direct?—Bless all sober and thinking men from a wife of this cast!

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

THE AUTHOR EXPECTS WILL MAKE A FULL ATONEMENT TO THE LADIES FOR TOO MUCH PLAIN DEALING, AS SOME OF THEM MAY THINK, OF THE PRECEDING CHAPTER.

WOMEN and wedlock are the common topicks of ridicule among men who, without one ſpark of genius or capacity, imagine themſelves wits, and ſet up for ſuch: but, whatever either they, or ſome who even have a better way of thinking in other things, pretend to alledge againſt the ſex, it is very evident, and muſt be confeſſed, that Nature has endowed the minds of many women with as great and valuable talents as ever ſhe beſtowed on men.

Numberleſs are the examples which might be brought from the records, both of ancient and modern hiſtory, to prove the truth of this aſſertion; but I ſhall content myſelf with mentioning only a few, yet enough to make thoſe unworthy maligners of a ſex, to whom they know in their own hearts they are indebted for all the convenience and happineſs of their lives, take ſhame to themſelves, and bluſh for what they have ſaid. Who is ſo ignorant, as not to have heard of the famed Cornelia of Rome; the mother of the Gracchi, and the wife of Brutus; the learned Hypatia of Greece; the Boadicea and the Cartiſmuda of ancient Britain? But it is needleſs to look back into ſuch diſtant times; the wife of the late Peter the Great of Muſcovy; the imperial heroine of Germany; Signora Laura of Italy; and the preſent queens of Sweden and the Two Sicilies; are no leſs publick than ſhining proofs of the capacity of a female mind. And even here, there are not wanting ſome, I may ſay many ladies, who in private, and almoſt obſcure life, are poſſeſſed of qualifications that might add luſtre to the higheſt ſtations. In fine, there is nothing more certain, than that if the women, generally ſpeaking, are leſs knowing than the men, it is only becauſe they are denied the ſame advantages of education, and the miſtaken mother laviſhes her whole cares in embelliſhing the pretty perſon of her daughter, and gives no attention to the cultivation of her underſtanding.

I am happy in the acquaintance of a lady whom I ſhall diſtinguiſh by the name of Amadea: ſhe had been married very young to a gentleman whom ſhe tenderly loved, and by whom ſhe was no leſs beloved; but had the misfortune to loſe him at the age of twenty-five, and was at the ſame time the mother of three daughters, the eldeſt ſcarce four years old. The land eſtate, which was very conſiderable, deſcended to the next male heir of the family; and all the perſonals, with a jointure of four hundred per annum, to the fair widow, and each of her children five thouſand pounds.

The firſt three years of her widowhood ſhe lived the life of a recluſe, ſeldom ſtirring out of her own houſe, except to her devotions, or when the neceſſity of her affairs obliged her. Nor did ſhe, with her mourning, throw this reſerve entirely off: though it is now full thirteen years ſince her dear huſband's death, ſhe neither viſits nor receives viſits as formerly, but confines her converſation to thoſe of her kindred, or very long and intimate acquaintance; never appears at any publick diverſion, and rejects even the firſt mention of propoſals for a ſecond marriage, though ſeveral very advantageous ones have been attempted.

All her cares have been turned on the education of her children, and all her pleaſures centered in obſerving the improvements they made by the inſtructions given to them. She had never ſuffered their infancy to be frighted with idle ſtories of ſpirits and hobgoblins, nor amuſed with fairy tales: from their moſt early years ſhe awakened reaſon in them; and contrived it ſo, that even the little ſports ſhe indulged them in, ſhould ſome way or other conduce to that great end.

As they grew bigger, ſhe had maſters to teach them muſick and dancing, the French and Italian languages, and as much of the Latin as was ſufficient to make them ſpeak and write Engliſh properly: but theſe politer ſtudies were not to take up all their time; the œconomy of domeſtick life ſhe looked upon as too neceſſary a qualification not to be well attended to; ſome hours in every day were ſet apart for needle-work; and, whenever the table was to be furniſhed with any thing extraordinary, they were ſure to be put under the tuition of the cook, and frequently aſſiſted her in thoſe parts of her buſineſs which were the moſt delicate and leaſt laborious.

Thus deſirous of enriching their minds with

with every useful kind of knowledge, it cannot be supposed that books were out of the question; no, each of these young ladies takes upon her, in her turn, to read to the two others the whole time they are at work. But, above all other things, this discreet mother was studiously watchful to prevent the pride and little vanities, so incident to human nature, from taking too fast hold of their young hearts. Betimes she taught them, that nothing concerning themselves, except the embellishment of their minds, was worthy their attention; that all cares relating to dress or person, beyond what cleanliness and decency required, were superfluous and silly; and that every minute wasted at the toilet would rob them of some advantage they might otherwise receive. I am well aware, those of my fair readers who have been brought up in a different manner—which, by the way, I fear are much the greatest part—will be apt to cry out against the conduct of Amadea; they will perhaps say, they wonder the poor girls are not moped, and that they must certainly be dull, stupid creatures; but those who think thus need only have a sight of the young ladies to be convinced of their mistake: nothing can be more lively and spirituous than all the three sisters; smiles of innocence and joy dwell for ever on their faces, and denote an innate chearfulness and satisfaction, which all those hurrying pleasures, so eagerly pursued by others, have not the power of bestowing.

I made several Invisible Visits to them in their own apartment; and I know very few things capable of giving me a more sincere delight than I took in observing their behaviour, at times when they thought themselves entirely free from all inspection, and had no occasion to put restraint upon their words or actions. Never did I find them lolling out of a window, or consulting their looks or motions in the great glass; never heard them complaining they were not permitted to be first in every new fashion; never wishing to be in the Mall, or any other publick place; never wantonly giggling about love or lovers; never quarrelling with each other, or ridiculing the foibles of their acquaintance. Sometimes I caught them playing and singing to their instruments; at others, amusing themselves with practising some new dance, and not seldom busily employed in needle-work for the use of the family; and at the same time, making such remarks as occurred to them on some passage or other in history: in fine, I could perceive nothing but what put me in mind of the three Graces, who, according to one of our poets, are actuated but by one soul, and that all harmony and sweet contentment.

The truth is, Amadea never makes use of any austerity; the precepts she gives are only enforced by her own example, and delivered in such a manner as to steal themselves upon the mind, and have no need of any compunction from authority: so that one may truly say—

'Wisdom in her appears so bright and gay,
'They hear with pleasure, and with pride
'obey.

Happy the children who have such a mother; happy the mother who has children such as these! I am persuaded, many examples of this kind might be found, if parents would be at the pains to pursue the same measures Amadea did, and instil into their offspring the principles of virtue and wisdom, before they knew what was meant by vice and folly.

CHAP. VII.

CONTAINS THE RECITAL OF AN ADVENTURE, WHICH, PERHAPS, WILL NOT BE FOUND LESS INTERESTING, FOR IT'S BEING NOT ALTOGETHER OF SO SINGULAR A NATURE AS SOME OTHERS IN THIS WORK MAY HAVE APPEARED.

I Was one morning taking my Invisible progression into those pleasant fields which lie behind Montague House, not with the least view of making any discoveries, for I could expect none in that retired place, but merely to enjoy the benefit of the fresh air. I had not walked many minutes, however, before I heard the tread of some persons close behind me. I stepped aside to let them pass, and saw that one of them was Narcissa, the only daughter of a gentleman who lived in that neighbourhood. The person who accompanied her was her maid, as I soon after found by the following dialogue between them—

Narcissa. Indeed, Betty, I think Captain Pike shews but little love to let us be here before him.

Betty. Oh, Madam, you ſhould conſider that gentlemen in his poſt are not always maſters of their time: you know he ſaid he came to town on affairs of the regiment, and ſomething, perhaps, may have happened; but, whatever it is that detains him, it cannot be for want of affection; I am ſo certain of that, I would pawn my life upon it.

Narciſſa. You are very confident, Betty, to offer ſuch ſecurity for a man you have never ſeen but twice in your life.

Betty. If I had never ſeen him but once, Madam, I have ſeen enough to make me know that he loves you to diſtraction. Poor gentleman! if he ſhould not ſucceed in his addreſſes, I am ſure he has reaſon to curſe me.

Narciſſa. Curſe thee, Betty!—why curſe thee?

Betty. He might never have ſeen you if it had not been for me. Don't you remember, Madam, how I teazed you to go into a ſhop, and buy the laſt new play? He was ſitting reading when we came in; and I ſhall never forget how he threw down the pamphlet he had in his hand, and ſtared at you, and how he ſighed. Poor ſoul! he loſt his heart from that very moment. Then how he followed us into the Park; and how he trembled when he aſked your leave to join us!

Narciſſa. Piſh! that might be all affectation.

Betty. No, Madam, no ſuch matter; the tone may deceive one, but the eyes cannot. And then, when you were ſo good to give him a meeting afterwards in the walk by Roſamond's Pond, how tenderly he expreſſed himſelf! For my part, my heart melted at every word he ſaid.

Narciſſa. He can talk moving enough, that's certain; but yet, Betty, I ought not to be too haſty in giving credit to a man I know ſo little of, or what deſigns he may have upon me.

Betty. Nay, Madam, I think you know as much of him as you can do without being married to him. Did not he tell you his name was Pike, and that he was a captain of Colonel *******'s regiment? As to his deſigns, you cannot doubt of their being honourable, as he begged you would permit him to viſit you, and aſk your father's leave to make his addreſſes.

Narciſſa. Ah, Betty, I wiſh ſuch a thing could be, for he is a prodigious pretty man; but it is impoſſible! You know my father hates a ſoldier, calls them a pack of locuſts; beſides, he has always deſigned me for Mr. Oakly.

Betty. Aye, Madam, and will make you have Mr. Oakly too, or lead apes in hell, if you don't take care to prevent it.

Narciſſa. Heigh ho!

Betty. Never ſigh, Madam, but reſolve.

Narciſſa. On what?

Betty. To run away from a forced marriage; to exert the ſpirit of a true-born Engliſhwoman, and be your own provider.

Narciſſa. How thou talkeſt!

Betty. I talk nothing but reaſon, Madam. But here comes one who I fancy will be able to urge it more effectually.

The perſon whom ſhe had been ſo ſtrenuouſly pleading for, now appeared: he was a tall, well-made man, and had a good ſoldierly aſpect; but yet I thought I diſcovered ſomething about him that ſhewed he had not always been accuſtomed to wear the rich cloaths he now had on; there wanted that eaſy freedom in his air, which denotes the true-bred gentleman; and I preſently ſet him down in my mind, either for an impoſtor, or one whom ſome lucky chance had elevated far above his birth. He approached Narciſſa with a low bow; and after taking hold of one of her hands, and kiſſing it with the greateſt fervency, addreſſed her in theſe terms—

Capt. How miſerable have I been, my angel, in being kept thus long from your divine preſence!

Narciſſa. I do not doubt, Sir, but you have been better engaged.

Capt. Cruel ſuppoſition! How can you ſo far wrong me, as to imagine that the whole world has any thing in it I ſhould put in competition with the bleſſing I now enjoy? But the major of our regiment is in town, and unluckily ſent for me this morning: we ſubalterns muſt obey our commanding officer; but I hope in a few months to be colonel, and I ſhall then have leiſure to lie eternally at your feet.

Betty. Ah, Sir, I am afraid, before that time, my lady will be obliged to have ſomebody elſe lie at her feet.

Narciſſa. Hold your prating, huſſy. Who gave you the privilege of ſpeaking?

Betty. Madam, the reſpect I have for you will not ſuffer me to be ſilent.—I tell

tell you nothing but the truth, Sir; my lady will be forced to marry a man to whom she has the greatest aversion.

Capt. O Heaven! so near being torn from all my hopes! And can you, Madam, can a lady of your delicacy submit——

Narcissa. Sir, this foolish wench talks she knows not what; I may live single if I please.

Capt. Live single! Heaven forbid! No, nature endowed you not with such superior charms, but to bless some man who, by his abundant love, might make him worthy of them. O that I were the happy he!

Narcissa. Think not of it, Captain; my father would never give his consent to any one but the person he has made choice of for me; much less would he endure to see me wedded to a gentleman in the army.

Capt. And have you, too, that implacable aversion to a sash and cross?

Narcissa. I will not pretend to say I have; I think the army our only security in time of war, and the greatest ornament of our country in times of peace.

Capt. O, then, if I could flatter myself there was nothing in my person more disagreeable to you than in my function, I should have nothing left to fear.

Narcissa. Yes, indeed, you would, Sir, a great deal; for I assure you, if I married you, my father would not give me a groat.

Capt. Let him keep his dirty trash; I despise money; the commission I enjoy at present will keep us above contempt, and I have money in the Bank ready to purchase the first vacant command of a regiment.

Narcissa. Can you imagine I would give myself to a man who has but just begun to tell me that he loves me?

Capt. My whole life shall be but one continued scene of courtship; be assured I shall not be the less, but infinitely the more your adorer by being your husband. O, then, be just to my ardent passion, generously put an end to my despair.

Narcissa. Bless me, what would the world say of such a thing!

Capt. The wise, Madam, despise all forms. Do not kings and princes marry those they never saw before? Besides, the late proceedings of the legislature lay you under a necessity of coming to a speedy resolution.

Betty. Aye, Madam, remember the act.

Capt. Aye, Madam, consider how soon that fatal Monday will arrive, which takes from you the power of snatching from misery the man who loves you more than life, and would sacrifice every thing for you!

Narcissa. I must confess, Captain, your offering to take me without a fortune demands some gratitude on my part; and if—But no more; I see a lady yonder whom I would not wish should surprize us in this conversation: this evening you shall know my final resolution. Where can I send to you?

Capt. I have an appointment with some young officers this afternoon at Will's Coffee-House, Whitehall, and shall there wait my doom with the most ardent impatience; but before you pass the sentence of my fate, think, O think, my life or death depends upon it!

Narcissa. Well, well, be easy; but go.

Capt. I must obey: may Love and all it's powers plead for me!

He said no more, but turned away as his mistress had commanded, and passed on to another part of the field, while she advanced to meet the lady she had mentioned. But Betty, who was heartily vexed at this accident, could not forbear crying out as they went along—'I wonder what should bring Marilla here!'

The words were either not heard, or not regarded by Narcissa, who, I could perceive by her looks, was little less disconcerted: she met her friend, however, with a shew of gaiety and satisfaction; and as soon as they came near each other, saluted her in these terms—

Narcissa. My dear Marilla! it is a wonder to see you in such a place as this; you used to be an enemy to all solitary walks.

Marilla. So I am still; but I have been at your house, and was told you were here, so came in mere good nature to hinder you from indulging melancholy; but I find I might have spared myself that trouble. Pray, who was that pretty fellow that left you just now?

Narcissa. I know not, he only came up to us, seeing nobody else in the place, I suppose, to ask which was the nearest way to Great Russel Street.

Marilla. Rather to ask the way to a lady's heart, who lives not far from Great Russel Street. Oh, Narcissa, you cannot deceive me; I could easily perceive, at

the distance I was, that he did not part from you with the air of a man who had no other business than to ask such an impertinent question. Besides, I must tell you that you are a very ill dissembler; your blushes declare that he is a lover: I know well enough that you met him here by appointment. Pr'ythee, let me into the whole of the secret.

Narcissa still persisted in her first assertions; but the other seemed not to give credit on that score, and assuming a more serious air, spoke thus—

Marilla. I perceive, my dear Narcissa, I am not thought worthy of your confidence, though I am very certain you have not a friend in the world who wishes your happiness with more sincerity than I do.

Narcissa. I believe it, my dear, and am much obliged to you; but you would not have me tell lyes to shew my gratitude?

Marilla. Well, well, I shall urge you no farther; and should not have been so impertinent to take any notice of what I saw, but for the transport it gave me to imagine you might now have an opportunity of delivering yourself from the danger of being forced into a marriage with a man whom I have heard you declare so great an aversion for.

Narcissa. And suppose the thing were really as you have taken it into your head to fancy, would you have me disoblige my father by marrying without his consent?

Marilla. Yes, when he will give his consent to nobody but one with whom you must be miserable; for, besides the dislike you have to the person of Oakly, his temper is such as would break a woman's heart in two months. You know I am very intimate with his sister, and cannot avoid seeing oddities in his behaviour as have made me tremble for you a thousand times.

Narcissa. I cannot think my father will ever go about to compel my inclinations.

Marilla. Oakly is of another opinion; for I can tell you, he makes no scruple to say, that if you do not marry him, you will marry nobody: therefore, without diving into the secrets of your heart, let me advise you, my dear creature, not to lose the short time allowed you, but if you have any offer less disagreeable to you than Oakly, accept it at once; three days hence it will be out of your power.

Narcissa. But, my dear, what man that is worth having will marry a woman without a fortune?

Marilla. If I were a man, I should tell you that your person was a sufficient fortune, and I do not doubt but that there are a great many who would think so. But you have two thousand pounds left you by your grandmother, independent of your father; and I dare say, if you were once married, and the thing past recal, he would forgive it. Consider, you are his only daughter, and both your brothers are provided for; the one by an estate, and the other by a good preferment in the church.

What answer Narcissa would have made I know not: it began to rain very fast, so that the ladies were obliged to mend their pace, and make all the haste they could out of the field. Marilla took the first chair she met with, saying it would be dinner time before she should be able to get dressed. Narcissa and her maid ran home through the shower, and I followed; not only to take shelter, but also to hear the result of the young lady's determination on what had passed between her and Captain Pike. As soon as they had plucked off their wet hats and capuchins, and Narcissa had a little re-settled herself, she said to her maid—

Narcissa. Well, Betty, this has been an odd morning!

Betty. I hope it will prove a lucky one, Madam. But I am glad you did not tell Marilla any thing of the matter.

Narcissa. She was so pressing, that I had half a mind; but when I considered how great she is with Oakly's sister, I thought it was better to keep her in ignorance.

Betty. Much better, indeed, Madam. But, pray, what do you resolve to do about the captain?

Narcissa. Why, I must e'en have him, I think.

Betty. You made him a kind of promise to send to him.

Narcissa. I did so, and will keep it. I will write to him this moment, before any company comes in to prevent me.

Betty. You are in the right, Madam: there is nothing like the time present.

TO

'TO CAPTAIN PIKE.

'SIR,

'I Should be guilty of an injuſtice 'both to myſelf and you, not to be 'ſenſible of the proof you offer of your 'ſincerity. I find in it, indeed, all that 'can be imagined, and much more than 'could be expected, of love, honour, 'and generoſity; and I hope I ſhall 'hereafter ſtand excuſed to my father 'and the world, for taking a ſtep ex-'cited by gratitude, and approved of by 'my reaſon. Meet me, therefore, to-'morrow morning, at eight preciſely, 'in the Piazza next King Street, Co-'vent Garden; where I will put myſelf 'under your protection, and be con-'ducted by you to whatever place you 'ſhall judge moſt proper for the ce-'remony which muſt make me eternally 'yours.

'NARCISSA.'

Having ſealed this billet, ſhe gave it to her maid, with a ſtrict charge to ſend it by a truſty meſſenger. On which the girl replied—'Yes, Madam, you may 'depend on the ſafe conveyance; for I 'will be the bearer of it myſelf.'

What farther chat paſſed between the miſtreſs and maid was too inſignificant to be repeated; nor, indeed, did I ſtay to hear much of it, having already gained all that was neceſſary for the preſent: ſo ſhut up my Tablets, and retired on the firſt opportunity I found for my leaving the houſe.

As it was plain to me, however, that Betty was deeply intereſted in the conceſſion Narciſſa had made to the captain, and I had alſo ſome ſuſpicion that he was not in reality the perſon he pretended to be, I reſolved to go in the evening to the coffee-houſe, and be witneſs of his behaviour on receiving the letter Betty was to bring. Accordingly I went, and found him there; not, as he ſaid, in company with young officers, but ſitting alone, in a corner of the room, with his hat very much flapped. A few minutes after I came in, a waiter called aloud to know if one Captain Pike was there; on which he ſtarted up, and anſwering to the name, was told a gentlewoman at the door deſired to ſpeak with him. He went haſtily out, and I purſued his ſteps, not doubting but it was the emiſſary of Narciſſa: as ſoon as he ſaw it was ſhe, he cried out, in ſome ſurprize—

Capt. What, ſiſter, are you come yourſelf! You bring me no bad news, I hope?

Betty. No, no; the beſt you can expect. But walk this way; it is not proper to ſtand here to talk. For Heaven's ſake! why did you venture to appoint ſuch a publick place as this?

Capt. Nobody knows me here; my captain never uſes this houſe. But tell me, how goes our affair?

Betty. Rarely. She will have you; here is her promiſe under her own hand.

By this time they were got about the middle of Scotland Yard; where Betty having given him the letter of Narciſſa, he ſtopped to read it by the light of a lamp at a gentleman's door; and, as ſoon as he had finiſhed, cried out—

Capt. This is brave, indeed! And nothing, ſure, was ever ſo lucky as her fixing to-morrow for our wedding; for the captain went to Hampſtead this morning, with a whore he picked up in the Park the other night, and will not be in town theſe two days; ſo I ſhall have all that time to myſelf, and can get at what cloaths and linen I want. But, my dear ſiſter, what ſhall I do with this girl when I have married her? where muſt I carry her?

Betty. That is what I came to talk about. You muſt take a fine lodging for her, and order a handſome dinner to be provided at ſome tavern or other. Every thing muſt be done with a grand air, that ſhe may ſuſpect nothing till after you have conſummated. Hah, brother!

Capt. But, Betty, I have no money: all will go wrong ſtill if you cannot help me out.

Betty. Nothing would go right, if it were not for me: you may thank God for having ſuch a ſiſter; you might have been a foot-ſoldier elſe as long as you lived. But there is no time to be loſt. I have brought you four pieces, and I believe that will be ſufficient for every thing. Go and buy a ring, and ſecure a lodging, immediately.

Capt. You may be ſure I ſhall not fail. But harkye, Betty, take care ſhe brings the writings of her two thouſand pounds, and all her jewels.

Betty.

Betty. Aye, aye; she shall leave nothing of value behind her, I'll engage.

With these words they separated; and I went home, heartily glad that I had made this discovery, and determined to save Narcissa, if possible, from the misfortune she was so near falling into: to which end I sat down to my escritoire, and immediately wrote to her father in the following terms—

'TO JOHN ******, ESQ.

'SIR,

'THE shock I am now about to give 'you, can only be excused by 'it's being done to prevent you from re-'ceiving a much greater and more last-'ing one. Sorry am I to tell you, yet 'so it is, your daughter Narcissa is on 'the point of utter destruction; she has 'promised, and is resolved to keep her 'word, to join herself in marriage with 'a wretch who, though of the most ab-'ject rank, in order to seduce her in-'nocence, assumes the character of a 'gentleman, and calls himself Captain 'Pike. Betty, her waiting-maid, is 'sister to the impostor, and has been the 'conductress of the whole villainous de-'sign. Every thing is prepared for the 'accomplishment, and to morrow is the 'day fixed; but I hope this intelligence 'will reach you time enough to pre-'vent so irremediable an evil. I am, 'Sir, your unknown well-wisher and 'humble servant.'

Having sent this away, and fully discharged what my honour and conscience represented as a duty, I flattered myself with the expectation of seeing, the next day, treachery and deceit receive the mortification they justly merited.

CHAP. VIII.

CONTAINS A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE EFFECTS PRODUCED BY THE GOOD INTENTIONS OF THE INVISIBLE SPY, WITH SOME OTHER SUBSEQUENT PARTICULARS.

THOUGH I had not the least room to doubt but that the information I had given the father of Narcissa would have all the success I wished, yet I could not avoid being extremely curious to see in what manner the persons concerned would behave on this occasion. Accordingly, I went to the house the next morning about eleven, expecting to find that the maid had been turned out of doors, the mistress in tears for her disappointment, and the old gentleman rejoicing in the thoughts of having saved his beloved daughter from undoing herself. A servant happening to be at the door, receiving some shoes from a fellow who had been just cleaning them, I gained an easy access. Finding nobody in the lower floor, I went up stairs; but the same solitude reigned likewise there. I then proceeded a story higher, and there saw only a servant-maid sweeping out a room, which, by a toilette being set out, I judged was the chamber of Narcissa. I was very much surprized to find every thing so quiet in a place where I looked for nothing but confusion, and stopped on the stairs to consider what might be the occasion; when, on a sudden, I heard the ringing of a small bell, and presently after saw a footman running hastily up. I followed him where he went, which was into the chamber of Narcissa's father, who was not yet up, but now called for his cloaths. As he was putting them on, he cast his eyes on the table, and seeing a letter lie there, asked his man when, and from whom, it came. To which he replied—'Sir, it was left for 'you last night by a porter; but as you 'came home so late, would not disturb 'you with it.'

I was astonished on finding that this was no other than the letter I had sent him; but more troubled that, by the delivery of it being delayed, poor Narcissa had fallen into the trap laid for her. But if I, a stranger, could be so much affected, what agony must rend the tender father's heart! Scarce had he gone through the half of what I wrote, before he cried out, casting, at the same time, a look full of despair and rage upon his servant—

Father. Ill-fated wretch! what mischief, what ruin, has thy neglect brought upon me and my family! You imagined I was drunk last night, I suppose; but had I been so, here is enough in this letter to have brought me to my senses. But go, run up to my daughter's chamber; see if she be there.

Footman.

Footman. Sir, she went out very early this morning with Mrs. Betty, and is not yet come back.

Father. Nor ever will, I fear. The intelligence this brings is too true, I find. Run to Mr. Oakly and my cousin Johnson's; bid them come this instant. Fly!—and, do you hear, bring a coach with you. If I can recover her before consummation, her ruin may be yet prevented.

The fellow went on his errand; and the old gentleman in the mean time stamping, biting his lips, and shewing all the marks of an inward distraction, made an end of putting on his cloaths, in order to go in search of his lost daughter, when the gentlemen he had sent for should arrive: but I staid not to hear what method would be pursued for that purpose, as thinking it of no moment, and that it would be better to return again in the evening, when I might probably hear what success had attended their endeavours. The time I chose for going was as late at night as I thought I might get an opportunity of entering, yet the disconsolate father was but just come home: his two friends were with him; they said all they could to alleviate his sorrows, but it availed no more than preaching to the winds. They had found out, it seems, where the marriage was performed: after which, they went to all the taverns, coffee-houses, and other publick places, which they heard were frequented by officers, to enquire concerning one who called himself Captain Pike, but could not receive the least information of any one who bore that name; and all the consolation the old gentleman had for the pains he had taken was, the cruel certainty that his dear daughter was inevitably undone.

Though I saw very little probability of my being able to learn any thing more at this house than I had already done, yet I could not forbear calling constantly there every day; and at last, by this dint of continued application, I became acquainted with the whole melancholy secret of Narcissa's fate almost as soon as the family knew it themselves. The pretended captain had managed every thing according to the direction of his sister. As soon as the ceremony was over, he had conducted his bride to very handsome lodgings, where an entertainment suitable to the occasion was provided; and the poor deluded young lady, seeing nothing but what served to make her satisfied with what she had done, in return for his imaginary generosity, made him a present of her two thousand pounds, which was in India bonds.

Her contentment might, perhaps, have lasted some little time longer than it did, if she had not proposed waiting on her father, to implore his forgiveness and blessing; on which the impostor, having now got his ends, thinking it needless to continue the deception any longer, confessed that he was no more than a private man in the army; but told her that he was now treating with his captain for his discharge, and would purchase a commission with some part of the money she had given him; and added, that till these two points were accomplished, it would be altogether improper to appear before her father.

Narcissa fell into the utmost distraction on this eclaircissement, vowed not to live with a wretch who had put so base a trick upon her, but would go home to her father, who she doubted not would find means to punish such a flagrant piece of villainy. He only laughed at her reproaches, and said, that as she was his wife, she had it not in her choice to leave him. Betty, also, now threw off the character of a servant, and assuming the authority of a sister, pretended to rebuke her idle prating, as she insolently termed it.

She found an opportunity, however, of making her escape, and fled for refuge to the house of a near relation; who, on hearing her story, undertook to intercede with her father; which he did so successfully, that the old gentleman forgave, and took her again into favour. All possible measures were taken to set aside the marriage, and compel the impostor to refund the money Narcissa had so unwarily bestowed upon him; but as he knew the law was too much on his side, having not married her in a false name, though under a false character, he carried things with a very high hand; would part with nothing, not even the jewels she had left behind; but even threatened to commence a process against any one who detained her person. In fine, all that could be done was to get him to sign articles of separation. After which

Narcissa

Narciſſa retired into the country, where I hear ſhe reſolves to waſte the whole remainder of her days in a melancholy contrition for the raſhneſs of her ungoverned conduct.

I muſt not forget to let my readers know, that Marilla is ſince married to Mr. Oakly; with whom, as I am credibly informed, ſhe was long paſſionately in love; and on that motive uſed the utmoſt of her endeavours to ſtrengthen the averſion her fair friend had for him.

END OF THE SIXTH BOOK.

THE

INVISIBLE SPY.

BOOK VII.

CHAP. I.

THE AUTHOR FLATTERS HIMSELF WILL BE NO UNACCEPTABLE PRESENT TO ALL THOSE OF THE FAIR SEX, WHO ARE EITHER TRULY INNOCENT, OR WOULD PRESERVE THE REPUTATION OF BEING SO.

WHEN a young woman, of what rank or degree ſoever, indulges herſelf in a too great freedom of converſation with one of a looſe and wanton behaviour, ſhe cannot wonder that thoſe who are witneſſes of their intimacy ſhould ſuſpect her guilty of the ſame inclinations; and that, though perfectly innocent of the faults of her companion, is made an equal partaker of her ſhame. Women, who are either born to, or reduced by accidents, to low and indigent circumſtances, excuſe themſelves by ſaying, that the neceſſity of their affairs compels them to keep an acquaintance with perſons whom they find it their intereſt to oblige. But if this be an inſufficient pretence, as certainly it is, ſince there is no intereſt which ought to be put in competition with reputation, what can be alledged in behalf of ladies of fortune and quality, who have it in their power to chuſe their company, and it cannot be ſuppoſed would converſe with any whoſe manners they did not approve?

In fine, there is no one error in conduct, which, according to my opinion, the ſex in general ſhould be more upon their guard againſt than this; for though ſome, dazzled with the pomp of ſhew and equipage, may be weak enough to imagine, that to appear in publick, or to be known to have an intimacy with a woman of a polluted fame, provided ſhe be a perſon of condition, will bring no blemiſh on their own characters, nor be of any prejudice to their morals; yet that ſuch an intimacy is extremely dangerous to both, may be very eaſily demonſtrated.

As to character. If the world ſhould be more ſilent than it ever was, or ever will be on ſuch occaſions, it cannot be expected that a woman, who has thrown off all regard for her own honour, ſhould have any for that of the perſons ſhe converſes with, or would even wiſh they ſhould be thought poſſeſſed of a virtue ſhe is entirely deſtitute of herſelf. No; on the contrary, ſhe will rather have recourſe to all the wicked artifices ſhe may be miſtreſs of, to caſt a ſhade over that brightneſs which would render her own deformity more conſpicuous. But this

is not the worſt danger to which an innocent perſon is expoſed by keeping company with a bad woman. We are told, from an unqueſtionable authority, that it is hard to touch pitch without being defiled; and certainly there is nothing more evident, than that vice naturally loſes great part of it's horrors by becoming familiar to the ſight. The chaſte heart, which ſhudders at the bare repetition of indecent actions, by accuſtoming itſelf to be a witneſs of them, ceaſes firſt to wonder, and by degrees to deteſt them; and though I will not be ſo uncharitable as to ſay, that the mind is always corrupted by ſuch a communication, yet I will venture to affirm, that the manners will be ſo.

I know very well, that the timid modeſty I would recommend, as the ſureſt guardian of a virgin's honour, has for many years been exploded; and that ſince ſome foreign cuſtoms have unhappily been introduced among us, to be capable of bluſhing is looked upon, by thoſe who paſs for models of politeneſs, as an indication of the want both of wit and good-breeding. This audacity of behaviour being ſo much the mode, it is not a little difficult to diſtinguiſh between thoſe who really purſue the dictates of a licentious inclination, and thoſe who put on a ſhew of it, merely to comply with the example of others; and a perſon who judges of a woman by what he ſees of her in publick, runs a very great riſque of being miſtaken. Often has my opinion been led aſtray in this point, even in regard of ladies with whom I was moſt intimately acquainted, and ſaw every day; nor did I ever dare to give a character of any one of them, till my Belt of Inviſibility afforded me an opportunity of prying into the ſecrets of the alcove.

Coriſca and Emilia are two celebrated beauties. They are almoſt equally followed and admired by the men, but neither of them were ever jealous or envious of the praiſes given to the other; and there was once ſo exceſſive a fondneſs between them, that they were ſcarce ever ſeen aſunder. Coriſca has been married ſome years; Emilia has not yet been prevailed upon to part with her liberty: but though there is this difference in their circumſtances, there has been too much appearance upon exact ſimilitude in their humours and conſtitutions; I ſay, in appearance, for I have ſince diſcovered that light and darkneſs are not, in fact, more widely diſtant.

Coriſca, long before ſhe became a wife, was looked upon as what they call a female rake. Some there were, however, who imputed what ſhe did only to the too great vivacity of her humour, and would not believe her guilty of any real crime; but far the greater number were of a quite different opinion: and, indeed, the little regard ſhe takes of her family ſince her marriage, the publick contempt with which ſhe treats her huſband, and the frequent quarrels ſhe has with him in private, but too much juſtify the worſt character that can be given either of her œconomy or her chaſtity. Yet, notwithſtanding all this, there is a certain ſomething in her air, her wit, and manner of behaviour, ſo engaging to both ſexes, that ſhe has always been, and ſtill continues to be, conſtantly viſited by perſons not only of the beſt fortunes, but of the beſt reputations; who chuſe rather to ſeem blind to her faults, than deny themſelves the pleaſure of her converſation. It is, beyond all diſpute, a very great pity, that a woman ſo plenteouſly endowed by nature with every qualification to ſhew virtue in it's moſt amiable colours, ſhould, through a ſtrange depravity of principles and inclination, make uſe of all the fine talents ſhe is miſtreſs of only to varniſh over the foul face of vice, and give a pleaſing aſpect to the deformity of ſin and ſhame.

The beautiful perſon of Emilia, her ſprightly wit, her good humour and affability, rendered her the darling of all who knew her. They beheld, with an infinity of concern, her intimacy with Coriſca; and thoſe who, either by proximity of blood, or a long acquaintance with her, thought themſelves privileged to offer their advice, did it in the ſtrongeſt terms, and ſpared no remonſtrances that might prevail on her to break off ſo dangerous a communication; but ſhe was deaf to all that could be ſaid to her on this ſubject. It was her misfortune to become the miſtreſs of her own actions at too early an age; what fortune ſhe was poſſeſſed of was in her own hands; and as ſhe was entirely independent on her friends, would not ſubmit to be directed by them.

In juſtice to this young lady's character, however, I muſt ſay, and ſhall hereafter

hereafter prove, that there is a fund of honour and virtue in her ſoul ſufficient to have made her look with contempt and deteſtation on the conduct of Coriſca; and to have obliged her, if not to break off all converſation with her, at leaſt not to appear with her in publick, or make one in any party of pleaſure where ſhe was engaged. But, alas! the ſeeds of thoſe noble principles for a time lay dormant in her; choaked up with the natural levities of youth, and the modiſh exceſſes of the age, they had not power to ſhoot forth into action. Innocently wanton, and indolently gay, ſhe ſaw not the danger to which ſhe expoſed her perſon and reputation, becauſe ſhe thought not of it, nor gave herſelf the pains to examine what ſnares might poſſibly be ſpread for her; but ſuffering herſelf to be continually hurried from one amuſement to another, never conſidered or reflected on any thing farther than the preſent ſatisfaction.

I have been thus particular in deſcribing the character and humour of Emilia, becauſe in the courſe of my rambles I have found too many others of the ſame giddy bent, who, without the leaſt propenſity to ill, have heedleſsly run into actions which have involved their whole future lives in diſhonour. Theſe have reaſon to pardon this digreſſion, eſpecially as it has not been tedious; and I ſhall now return to the adventure which occaſioned it.

Among the many Inviſible Viſits which for a conſiderable time together I had made to the apartment of this celebrated Coriſca, I happened to be there one morning when Favonius and Palamede were with her. The firſt of theſe gentlemen is of a very amorous inclination, and known to be what the world calls well with her; the other, though gay and lively as Mercury himſelf, has been reſtrained, either through want of inclination to her perſon, or his friendſhip to Favonius, from attempting to take any private liberties, and ſeldom viſits her but in his company. The diſcourſe they were engaged in, when I firſt broke in upon them, I found was on ſubjects of too trifling a nature for me to ſpread my Tablets for the reception of; ſo I ſhall make no repetition of any things which were ſaid till the entrance of Emilia, who came in ſoon after. The firſt ſalutations were no ſooner over, than Coriſca, taking her fondly by the hand, ſpoke thus—

Coriſca. Dear creature, this is an exceſs of goodneſs in you to come thus early; I did not expect you till dinner-time.

Emilia. Indeed, my dear, I never waited on you with ſo ill a will, nor came on an errand ſo diſagreeable to my inclination; for I have but juſt time to tell you, that I am deprived of the pleaſure I propoſed of paſſing the whole day with you.

Coriſca. On what occaſion?

Emilia. The moſt unlucky one that could have happened. An old aunt of mine has taken it into her head to quit her rookery and henhouſe in the country, and come to ſtare and be ſtared at in town. She arrived laſt night, and ſent me word ſhe muſt needs ſee me this morning: decency obliges me to go; ſhe is my godmother, and beſides is pretty rich.

Coriſca. But cannot you make ſome excuſe to leave her as ſoon as you have paid your compliments? I ſhall have all the world here this afternoon, and would not have you abſent upon any ſcore.

Emilia. It cannot be avoided. She pretends to have a huge fondneſs for me, and I know will detain me, with a thouſand impertinent declarations of it, till bed-time: ſo, my dear, adieu for this whole tedious day; to-morrow, I hope, will atone for this vexation.—Gentlemen, your ſervant.

In ſpeaking theſe laſt words, ſhe turned upon her heel, and ran out of the room; but not ſo haſtily but that Palamede, with one ſtride, joined her at the door, and led her down ſtairs. In the mean time Coriſca, looking on Favonius, ſaid to him—

Coriſca. I pity poor Emilia. The impertinent fondneſs of an old relation is almoſt as great a mortification as the ſaucy indifference of a young fellow one likes.

Favonius. The beautiful Coriſca, I am ſure, can never be in danger of experiencing the latter of theſe vexations.

To prove the ſincerity of this aſſertion, he cloſed it with a ſtrenuous embrace, which Coriſca returned. There was time for no more; Palamede came back; and Favonius, with a ſmile, ſpoke in this manner—

Favonius. By the ſparkle in your eyes, Palamede, I ſhould imagine the piece of gallantry you have ſhewed to Emilia has been more than ordinarily well received.

Palamede. This, and all others I have yet had in my power to treat that lady with, have been too trifling to deſerve much notice from her.

Favonius. Oh, every kind glance gives tranſport to a man in love!—You muſt know, Madam, I have juſt found out that Palamede is deſperately in love with Emilia.

Coriſca. Indeed!—And do you allow the charge, Palamede?

Palamede. Not altogether, Madam. I am not abſolutely in love; but confeſs I think Emilia an extremely fine girl, and have had ſome very odd dreams on her account.

Coriſca. What hinders you, then, from making your addreſſes to her?

Palamede. Why, faith, Madam, to confeſs the truth, I was afraid of not ſucceeding on the terms I wiſhed to do; and as for marriage, the circumſtances of my eſtate require I ſhould make choice of a wife with a much larger fortune than Emilia is poſſeſſed of.

Favonius. You are perfectly in the right, Palamede. A good fortune with a wife is abſolutely neceſſary for a man of pleaſure, as it enables him to make handſome preſents and entertainments to thoſe women he may happen to like better.

Coriſca. So, Palamede, you durſt not aſk Emilia the queſtion, for fear of meeting with a rebuff from her overſcrupulous virtue?

Palamede. That is indeed the caſe, Madam.

Coriſca. Then you are a fool. Not but I believe Emilia is perfectly innocent as yet; but what is innocence, what is virtue, what is honour, when oppoſed to love and inclination! Do you not know what Mrs. Behn, who muſt be allowed to be a perfect judge of nature in our ſex, ſays upon this occaſion?

'Oh, curſed Honour! thou who firſt didſt damn
'A woman to the ſin of ſhame!
'Honour! who taught her lovely eyes the art
'To wound, and not to cure the heart;
'With love t'invite, but to forbid with awe,
'And to themſelves preſcribe a cruel law.
'His chief attributes are pride and ſpight,
'His pow'r is robbing lovers of delight.
'Honour! that puts our words, that ſhould be free,
'Into a ſet formality!
'Thou baſe debaucher of the gen'rous heart,
'That teacheſt all our looks and actions art.
'What Love deſign'd a ſacred gift,
'What Nature made to be poſſeſs'd,
'Miſtaken Honour made a theft.
'Thou foe to Pleaſure, Nature's worſt diſeaſe!
'Thou tyrant over mighty kings,
'Be gone to princes palaces,
'But let the humble ſwain go on,
'In the bleſt paths of the firſt race of man,
'That neareſt were to gods allied,
'And, form'd for love, diſdain'd all other pride.'

The emphatick accents and graceful manner with which Coriſca pronounced theſe lines adding to the beauty of the poetry, ſtruck ſo much upon the hearts of the two gentlemen, that they could not forbear clapping their hands, and crying out—'Encore, encore, charming 'Coriſca!' On which ſhe laughed heartily, and replied—

Coriſca. I want none of theſe theatrical teſtimonies of approbation; I would only convince Palamede, from the unqueſtionable authority of our Engliſh Sappho, that when a woman loves, no conſiderations are of force to reſtrain her from acting up to the dictates of her paſſion.

Palamede. Aye, Madam, if I could flatter myſelf with the hopes of being loved by Emilia, I ſhould have nothing to apprehend.

Coriſca. I will not pretend to tell you that ſhe is ſo much in love as not to be able to eat, drink, or ſleep, for the thoughts of you; but I have heard her ſay a thouſand times over, I believe, that you are, without exception, the prettieſt fellow in the whole town; that you dreſs the beſt, and have ſomething peculiarly agreeable in your air and manner of behaviour: and on the ſtrength of this, and ſome other indications I have obſerved about her, I dare venture to affirm that you are far from being indifferent to her, and that ſhe would be little leſs pleaſed than yourſelf with an opportunity of being entertained by you in private.

Palamede. Dear Madam, you make me the moſt tranſported man alive! But by

by what means can such a thing be brought about? Some scheme must be laid for that purpose.

Corisca. Nothing more easy; I have it all in my head already; she will go any where with me; we shall be together to-morrow; you two shall come in as if by accident, and propose going to take the air on the other side of the water: there is a house the most commodiously situated that can be; good gardens, good wine, good every thing.—Favonius is well acquainted with the place.

Favonius. I suppose you mean that kept by Mrs. *******?

Corisca. The same. When we have been there some time, and it begins to draw near the hour proper to think of going home, you shall discharge the coach, and pretend the fellow got drunk and went away without your knowledge. There will be no possibility of procuring a vehicle to bring us to town, especially at night. Favonius must be content to do penance with me in loitering about the gardens, or in something or other, till morning, while you make the most of your time with Emilia.

Palamede. Excellent, my charming Machiavel! But how shall we prevail on Emilia to be separated from her dear Corisca?

Corisca. Leave that to my management; she shall suspect nothing of the matter, till she finds herself alone with you, and then it will be your business to make her satisfied with being so.

Palamede. Kind creature! where shall I find words to thank this compassion to a suffering lover?

Corisca. Never trouble yourself about thanks; good actions, they say, reward themselves.

Favonius. As for my part, I shall defer those acknowledgments which your excess of goodness demands from me, both on my own score and that of my friend, till to-morrow night, when they shall make part of that agreeable penance I am to perform.

This speech of Favonius paved the way for a conversation conformable enough to the characters of the persons engaged in it; but I am certain would not be well relished by that part of my readers which I am most ambitious of obliging: I shall therefore close the scene, as indeed I did soon after my Tablets, and quitted the apartments of this fair libertine, in order to retire to my own, and contemplate at leisure on what I had seen and heard.

CHAP. II.

PRESENTS THE READER WITH THE CATASTROPHE OF AN ADVENTURE VERY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT THE BEGINNING MAY HAVE GIVEN HIM REASON TO EXPECT.

THOUGH I had thought myself too well acquainted with the principles and inclinations of Corisca, to be at all surprized at any act of licentiousness she could possibly be guilty of, yet I could not defend my senses from being seized with the extremest shock, on finding she could be base enough to condescend to become the instrument of others pleasures, and betray the innocence of a young lady for whom she had as much friendship as is consistent with a woman of her character—forgetting all this while what the good old poet, Mr. Philip Massenger, tells us on an occasion similar to this of Corisca and Emilia—

'Virtue and Vice in one sole point agree,
'Each would be glad all like themselves might
'be.

In ruminating very wisely, as I then imagined, on what Corisca had said to Palamede, I must confess I entertained suspicions not at all to the advantage of poor Emilia: I fancied that she had in reality confessed a passion for that gentleman; and Corisca, in forming this contrivance to bring about a private interview between them, had done nothing but what she was convinced in her own mind would be highly satisfactory to her fair friend. It was never my custom, however, to place an entire dependance on conjecture, whether my own or that of another person; so resolved to be as convinced as my Invisible inspection could make me. Accordingly the next day, in the afternoon, I girded on my precious Belt, and went to the house of Corisca. Emilia was not yet come; but just as I arrived I heard her give orders to refuse admittance to all of her own sex except that lady, and also to all those of the other except Favonius and Palamede.

As

As I doubted not but I ſhould be able to fathom the whole truth of this affair, by the converſation that would paſs between theſe two ladies while they believed themſelves alone together, I was extremely impatient for the approach of Emilia, and equally rejoiced when I ſaw her enter. The firſt ſalutations they gave each other, were ſuch as might be expected from perſons who mutually profeſſed ſo warm and tender a friendſhip. The ſubjects they afterwards talked upon were not of any conſequence; not one word of Palemede nor the projected tour was mentioned; on which I abſolved Emilia from all blame on this account, and was ſorry I had ever wronged her. But the leſs room I had to condemn, the greater cauſe I had to pity her, and to deteſt the cruel plot contrived, and ſo near being put in execution againſt her virtue. But I had no time to indulge meditation; the gentlemen preſently came in; the propoſal, as agreed upon between them and Coriſca, was immediately made; the ladies gave a ready aſſent; a hackney-coach was ordered to be called, and every one ſeemed equally on the wing to be gone.

The reader will now perhaps imagine, that it being eaſy to ſee into the end of this affair, there was no occaſion for any farther enquiries in relation to it, and that curioſity had received it's utmoſt gratification; but I happened to be of a different way of thinking. I ſincerely pitied Emilia, and could not help being deſirous to ſee how ſhe would reſent the baſe artifice practiſed on her when ſhe ſhould diſcover it, and alſo how Coriſca would conduct the plot ſhe had contrived. It was no difficult matter for me to know the houſe they were going to, both by the deſcription I had heard given of it the day before by Coriſca, and alſo by what I had been told by other people concerning it's commodiouſneſs for intrigue; ſo I no ſooner found that a hackney-coach was ordered, than I haſtily quitted the poſt I was in, made the beſt of my way to the place of rendezvous, got there before them, took up my ſtand at the entrance, ſaw them alight, and followed them into a well-furniſhed ſpacious room, to which they were uſhered by a ſpruce waiter.

Wine and biſcuits were immediately ſerved up; and the company, after having refreſhed themſelves with this little regale, went to walk in the gardens, which I found indeed very pleaſant, well laid out into parterres and knots, and larger than I could have imagined. Favonius led Coriſca, and Palamede had Emilia by the hand, who, during this promenade, took the opportunity of entertaining her with many tender ſpeeches, but intermixed with nothing that the moſt chaſte ear might not have liſtened to without calling a bluſh upon the face. I was ſorry, however, to obſerve that ſhe received what he ſaid with a certain languiſhment in her eyes, which emboldened him to go on, and made me fear that he had indeed a ſecret aſcendancy over her incautious, unſuſpecting heart.

On their return into the houſe, a table was ſpread with every thing that could excite the appetite or exhilarate the ſpirits. The chearfulneſs and good humour of the gueſts gave a double reliſh to the repaſt; wit and ſparkling Champagne crowned the board; and though the ladies allayed the too great potency of the one by the aſſiſtance of water, yet the other flowed with no leſs ſtrength and vigour. After ſome hours had been paſſed in the height of gaiety, Coriſca on a ſudden looked upon her watch, and aſſuming a more ſerious air than ſhe was accuſtomed to wear, told the company that it was near one o'clock, and they muſt think of departing for London. To which Favonius replied—

Favonius. Among all the ridiculous things mankind was ever guilty of, I know none more ſo than the having ſet their wits to work to invent a machine, and then ſubmitting to be governed by it.

Coriſca. There are many other laws, as well as this, by which the ſilly world have bound themſelves to go contrary to the primitive rules of nature and inclination, indulging by ſtealth only thoſe pleaſures which they were born freely to enjoy: but, however, all theſe cuſtoms, diſagreeable as they are to people of real wit and ſpirit, muſt in ſome meaſure be complied with, or the ſtupid vulgar would preſently accuſe us of irregularity and indecency.

Palamede. I look upon every one here, Madam, to be above the cenſures of the vulgar, yet I will not pretend to enter into any arguments on that head; and dare anſwer for Favonius, as well as for myſelf, that he would not preſume to detain you a moment beyond the time you think proper to go.

Emilia.

Emilia. Indeed, gentlemen, I think, and I believe Coriſca does ſo too, that to ſtay any longer at this time would rather diminiſh than add to the ſatisfaction we have hitherto enjoyed.

Favonius. After ſuch a declaration, Madam, any farther preſſures to the contrary on our part, might juſtly be looked upon as impertinent and troubleſome; it is certainly your province to command, ours implicitly to obey.

In ſpeaking theſe laſt words, he went out of the room with Palamede, as it might be ſuppoſed to diſcharge the reckoning of the houſe; but in a few minutes returned, and, with a ſeeming concern in their faces, ſaid, that the coachman, either by having got drunk or miſtaking his orders, had gone away ſoon after he had ſet them down: on which Coriſca affected to be extremely ſurprized, and Emilia being really ſo, they both cried out at the ſame time—

Coriſca. This is the oddeſt accident ſure that ever happened!

Emilia. Bleſs me! which way ſhall we get home?

Palamede. As for going home, Madam, it is a thing quite out of the queſtion: we have enquired, and there is no poſſibility of procuring either coach, chariot, poſt-chaiſe, or any ſort of carriage whatever, till the morning breaks; ſo, ladies, you muſt content yourſelves with being our gueſts for the remainder of the night.

Coriſca. Well, ſince it is ſo, we muſt e'en make a virtue of neceſſity, and divert ourſelves as well as we can.

Palamede. It would be an unpardonable vanity in us, Madam, to imagine that any thing in our converſation could compenſate for the want of your repoſe; we will therefore order a bed to be got ready for you two ladies, while Favonius and myſelf watch the approach of day, in order to provide a vehicle for carrying us to town.

Coriſca. No, no, by no means, we will all ſhare the ſame fate; it would be ſtrange indeed, if four people of taſte and ſpirit could not find ſome way to amuſe each other for the ſpace of one night.

While ſhe was ſpeaking, a concert of flutes, a hautboy, a double curtal, and ſome other wind-muſick, on a ſudden ſaluted their ears; on which ſhe cried out—

Coriſca. Hark! muſick! if it continues, it will very well atone for the loſs of a few hours ſleep.

Emilia. Nothing ever happened ſo fortunately for me; I love muſick as I love my life, eſpecially of this ſort.

In ſpeaking this, ſhe ran haſtily to the window and threw up the ſaſh, in order to hear the ſeveral inſtruments more diſtinctly. Palamede followed, and they both ſeemed abſorbed in a moſt profound attention; which Favonius and Coriſca obſerving, took that opportunity of paſſing ſoftly behind them, and ſlipped out of the room. Emilia turning her head preſently after, with a deſign, as I ſuppoſe, to ſay ſomething either to the one or the other, was ſurprized at ſeeing neither of them there, and cried out to Palamede—

Emilia. Bleſs me! what is become of Favonius and Coriſca?

Palamede. I know not, Madam; perhaps they are gone down into the garden, to be nearer to the muſick, which ſeems to proceed from the lower end of the walk.

Emilia. Very likely; they might have told us, however; but ſince it is ſo, we will follow them.

Palamede. With all my heart, Madam; but firſt permit me to reveal a ſecret to you which you ought to be told, and my breaſt has long laboured with an impatience of diſcovering.

Emilia. A ſecret! What ſecret can you have with me, that would be worth loſing one note of this muſick to liſten to?

Palamede. I hope you will be of another opinion, Madam, when I ſhall tell you that the whole happineſs of my future life, and even my ſoul's eternal peace, depends upon it.

Emilia. You may tell me what you will, but I ſhall believe nothing of the matter; ſo let us rejoin our friends.

It is not ſo much by what people ſay, as by the manner in which they deliver themſelves, that the ſincerity of their words may be gueſſed at; and I was heartily glad to find, both by the looks of Emilia and the tone of her voice, that ſhe indeed had more inclination to do as ſhe had propoſed, than to ſtay and ſuffer herſelf to be entertained by Palamede in the way ſhe might eaſily perceive he was about to do it. The diſcreet intentions of this young lady, however, could avail her but little in her preſent ſituation; Palamede got between her and the door as ſhe was endeavouring to go out, and throwing himſelf upon his knees before her, and at the ſame time catching faſt hold of both her hands, ſaid to her—

Palamede.

Palamede. No, charming Emilia! I have not so long languished for an opportunity like this to let it now escape me! you must, you shall hear me. By Heaven I love you!—love you to the most raging height the passion can inspire! For many, many tedious weeks, you have been the only object of my nightly visions and waking thoughts; and——

He was going on, but Emilia interrupted him by replying in these terms, accompanied with an air full of resentment and confusion—

Emilia. Fye, Palamede, this raillery is impertinent and insipid, and what I could not have expected to be treated with by a person who has the character of good sense and breeding.

Palamede. Cruelly urged! Oh, could you see into my heart, you would find it all devoted to you! devoted to you with a tenderness so perfect as can be equalled by nothing but the charms that have subdued it. Frown not, adorable Emilia, nor struggle to get loose; for, by all my hopes, never will I quit the grasp I have taken of you, nor rise from the posture I am in till I have convinced you of the sincerity, as well as ardency, of the flame you have kindled in me!

Emilia. Sir, this nocturnal declaration is little consistent with that respect which is always the attendant of an honourable passion. If you had, indeed, any thoughts of me of the nature you pretend, I am no recluse, and you might have found a more proper season to acquaint me with them.

Palamede. The passion I am enflamed with, is not of a nature to submit to the dull forms observed by vulgar lovers. Besides, what season can be more fit for love than night, the friend of love? Turn your eyes towards the window, and behold the silver moon, with all the thousand twinkling stars! see how sweet, how mild they shine! with what benevolent aspects they dart their rays upon us! Listen to the melodious sounds you just now praised! Will not all these soften your soul, melt you into pity, and make you think such love as mine deserves some recompence?

Emilia. I'll hear no more; unhand me, Sir, and give me liberty to seek our friends; or be assured my cries shall raise the house.

He then let go her hands, and rose from the posture he had been in; but still kept his back close against the door, while with half a smile he replied to what she had said in this manner—

Palamede. Madam, you are obeyed in part; and if I acquiesce to every thing you demand, it is not to be imagined you would be one jot less in my power than now. Our friends are too deeply engaged with each other to suffer themselves to be interrupted; and as to the people of the house, they know their distance, and are always extremely deaf on these occasions.

On hearing him speak thus, she burst into a flood of tears, and throwing herself into a chair, cried out—

Emilia. O Heavens! is this possible! Can Coriſca be so vile! Am I betrayed! basely given up by her to infamy and ruin!

On hearing her make this exclamation, he left the place where he had been standing, and seated himself near her; then taking one of her hands, and pressing it tenderly to his lips, spoke to this effect—

Palamede. Not so, my angel! By Heaven, the transactions of this night shall be for ever a sacred and inviolable secret! not even Favonius nor Coriſca shall be acquainted with it if you desire the contrary: I know they will laugh at me; but no matter, I can bear all that, and much more, to comply with the least request made by my dear Emilia. O, then, be kind, and bless my longing wishes! let no reluctance damp the coming joys, but yield to share the happiness you give!

The consternation of Emilia, on finding she was exposed to the danger she now was in, by the very woman whom she most had loved, and most believed her friend, had thrown her into so profound a reverie, that I much question whether she heard any part of what Palamede had lately been speaking to her; till closing his protestations with a strenuous embrace, she started up, broke from him, and looking wildly round the room, she espied two swords, which Favonius and Palamede had plucked off on their entrance, and put in a window; she snatched up one of them, and drawing it out of the scabbard in an instant, held the point to her breast, saying at the same time—

Emilia. Here is at least a refuge from dishonour! That base woman, who thought to make me as vile as I now find she is herself, shall meet with a disappointment she perhaps does not expect.

If

If you offer to approach me, or advance one ſtep beyond the ſpot you ſtand upon, this goes into my heart.

The amazement, the ſhock, the confuſion Palamede was in at this action, is altogether impoſſible to deſcribe: her words, her looks, her voice, convincing him ſhe was indeed in earneſt, he remained ſpeechleſs, without motion, his eyes fixed on her in a kind of ſtupid ſtare, and ſeemed like one transfixed with thunder; at length, recovering himſelf a little, he ſaid to her in a faultering voice—

Palamede. For Heaven's ſake, Madam, wound not thus my ſoul by the ſight of your deſpair! You have no cauſe. It is certain that I long have loved you, but never had a thought of ſeducing your innocence. The plot to bring you hither was not of my contriving. 'Tis true I came into it, as where is the man who would not? But be aſſured I am no raviſher, nor capable of owing my pleaſure to brutal violence: Oh, therefore, throw aſide that cruel weapon, or turn the point on me, and if I make the leaſt attempt to offend your modeſty, bury it to the hilt within my boſom.

Emilia. Sir, I once looked upon you as a man of honour, and ſhould rejoice to find you could redeem yourſelf in my opinion.

Palamede. By all that's ſacred, not the utmoſt gratification of my looſeſt wiſhes could have given me half the joy as now, to prove myſelf not wholly unworthy the eſteem of ſuch exalted virtue. Charming Emilia! perfect in mind as well as form! in both angelic! behold me your convert! The love I had for you is now rarified into adoration! Your virtue, like chemiſts gold, turns all into itſelf, and leaves no groſſer particles behind! Forgive what is paſt, and never —never more will I preſume to entertain you with diſcourſes leſs chaſte and pure than your own virgin thoughts!

Emilia. May I believe this penitence ſincere?

Palamede. You may, by Heaven! and when I relapſe into my former crime, may infamy, diſeaſes, the contempt of the whole world, your eternal hatred, and every other curſe, fall on me!

Emilia. Then find ſome way, if poſſible, to take me immediately from this place, and conduct me ſafe to my own apartment.

Palamede. My readineſs to obey you, Madam, I hope, will prove the integrity of my preſent intentions, and be ſome atonement for the paſt. It is my happineſs to have it in my power to do what you require with much more eaſe than you imagine; you ſhall no longer, beautiful Emilia! be impoſed upon: the coachman, whom we pretended had left us, has only put up at an inn not above forty yards diſtant from this houſe; I ſuppoſe he may be gone to bed by this time, as we told him we ſhould not return to London till the morning; but I will ſend and have him rouzed.

He had ſcarce made an end of ſpeaking theſe words, when he rang the bell, and a waiter coming preſently up, he gave him the neceſſary orders for fulfilling the promiſe he had juſt given to Emilia; on which that young lady, with the utmoſt ſatisfaction in her voice and eyes, cried out—'This is truly honourable indeed, 'and worthy of yourſelf.'

Something which that inſtant ſtarted into the mind of Palamede, hindered him from making any anſwer, or even, perhaps, from hearing what ſhe ſaid: he rang the bell a ſecond time with all his force, and called for pen, ink and paper; which being brought, he told Emilia that decency and good manners would not ſuffer him to depart without taking ſome notice of the occaſion to Favonius, with whom he had always lived in a perfect good underſtanding, and therefore entreated her permiſſion to write a few lines to that gentleman. The requeſt was too reaſonable not to be complied with, and he ſat down and dictated the following epiſtle—

'MY DEAR FRIEND,

'THINGS have happened very dif-
'ferently from what I was made to
'expect in regard to Emilia: in fine,
'ſhe is not a woman, but an angel! As
'ſuch I ſhall always eſteem her, and
'think it my glory to obey every com-
'mand ſhe is pleaſed to lay upon me:
'the firſt ſhe has honoured me with, is
'to remove her hence, and conduct her
'to her own apartment, which I am juſt
'now about to do. I have no opportu-
'nity to diſcharge the muſick or the
'expences of the houſe, ſo beg you will
'take the whole upon you, and meet
'me to-morrow evening at Braund's,
'where we will ſup together, and ſettle
'that affair. Make what compliments

'and excuſes you ſhall think proper for 'me to Coriſca; and believe me, yours, '&c.

'PALAMEDE.'

While Palamede was thus employed, it alſo came into Emilia's head to let Coriſca know ſome part of the reſentment ſhe had conceived againſt her: accordingly ſhe took another pen out of the ſtandiſh, and expreſſed herſelf in theſe terms—

'MADAM,

'WHAT the united report of all 'who know you could never have 'made me believe, your behaviour this 'night has not only convinced me of, 'but alſo that the tongue of malice can 'find nothing wherewith to aggravate 'your real guilt. Was it not enough, 'O moſt ungenerous woman! to ſink 'your own honour and reputation in 'eternal infamy, but you muſt alſo en'deavour to drag others into perdition 'with you! Know, to your confu'ſion, that I happily eſcaped the ſnare 'you had laid for me; and ſhall reap 'this benefit by my late danger, as to 'avoid the company of a perſon whom 'to preſerve an acquaintance with muſt 'in the end have been the ruin of my 'character, if not of my virtue; for, be 'aſſured, I ſhall henceforward be as 'careful to ſhun your preſence, as ever 'I was eager to come into it. Here 'ceaſes all farther intercourſe between 'us. May the diſappointment of your 'baſe deſigns on me, ſerve as a warn'ing to you not to attempt the like on 'any other equally inadvertent and in'cautious as the much deceived

'EMILIA.'

They had juſt finiſhed, and made up the above billets, when the waiter returned, and told Palamede that he had, though not without ſome difficulty, prevailed on the coachman to riſe; and that, before he left the inn, he had ſeen him go into the ſtable to bring out the horſes. Palamede then gave him the letter he had wrote to Favonius, ſaying —'Be ſure you deliver this to the gen'tleman who came with us as ſoon as he 'ſhall be ſtirring, and let him know I 'ſhall ſend the coach back in the morn'ing.' Emilia alſo put into his hands her epiſtle to Coriſca, with theſe words— 'And let the lady know I left this for 'her.' The fellow replied, that they might depend he would be punctual in diſcharging the commiſſion they entrutted him with, and then withdrew.

Finding my Cryſtalline Tablets were now overcharged, I was obliged to ſhut them up; ſo can relate no farther particulars of what converſation paſſed between Palamede and Emilia during the ſmall time they waited for the coach to carry them away; and can only ſay in general, that the greateſt reſerve and diſtance was obſerved on both ſides. Emilia, though now perfectly ſatisfied with the contrition of Palamede, thought it would be imprudent to appear too gay; and Palamede, fearful to renew her apprehenſions, behaved to her with all the ſolemnity of a Chineſe mandarin.

On their going down, they were met at the bottom of the ſtairs by the woman who kept this tavern, or rather brothel; who uſhering in what ſhe had to ſay with a low curtſey, told Emilia, that ſhe flattered herſelf with the expectation of her ſleeping there that night, and hoped nothing diſagreeable had happened to occaſion her departure at ſo unſeaſonable an hour; adding, that ſhe ſhould never forgive herſelf if any thing in her houſe had diſobliged ſo ſweet a young lady. Emilia anſwered this fawning ſpeech only with a look of contempt; but Palamede told her ſhe need be under no concern on that ſcore; the lady had no objections to her houſe, but choſe never to ſleep out of her own apartment. No more was ſaid; they went into the coach, and I followed on foot; for I had not curioſity enough to make me ſtay the remainder of the night in that place, for no other purpoſe than to ſee how Favonius and Coriſca would behave on being told that Palamede and Emilia were gone, and receiving the epiſtles that gentleman and lady had left for them. I had a long walk home, but my Inviſibility ſecured me from the danger of any inſults; and the ſatisfaction that roſe in my mind, on the noble conqueſt virtue had gained over vice, made the way ſeem much leſs tedious.

A few days after I was informed, by the report of the town, that Palamede made his publick addreſſes to Emilia. Being willing to be better convinced of the truth of this matter, I made ſeveral viſits to Emilia's apartment, and found that in fact the thing was as I had been told.

told. Palamede, who really loved Emilia much more than perhaps he was ſenſible of himſelf, before this proof ſhe had given him of her virtue, got over that objection which the ſcantineſs of her fortune had before laid in his way; and Emilia, who had liked him as much as Coriſca had ſaid ſhe did, gave all the encouragement he could wiſh to his honourable paſſion. I look upon the affair to be now in a manner concluded on, and that a very ſhort time will conſummate their mutual wiſhes; a cataſtrophe which I doubt not but every generous reader will heartily rejoice at as well as myſelf.

Favonius, who is in reality a man of ſtrict honour and good principles, though ſomewhat too ſanguine in his amours, ſtill continues his intimacy with Palamede, and highly applauds his converſion in favour of the fair inſpirer of his honourable flame. Coriſca bites her lips whenever the name of Emilia is mentioned, and endeavours all ſhe can to traduce that virtue which ſhe had not the power to deſtroy: but all ſhe ſays on that ſcore ſerves only to ſhew more plainly her own bad heart; and Emilia, by refraining all converſation with her, has entirely regained that eſteem and good opinion which ſhe had well nigh loſt.

CHAP. III.

CONTAINS THE REHEARSAL OF A CONVERSATION WHICH THE AUTHOR ACCIDENTALLY HAPPENED TO BE WITNESS OF, AND LOOKS UPON HIMSELF AS BOUND BY AN INDISPENSABLE OBLIGATION TO MAKE PUBLICK; THOUGH PERFECTLY CONSCIOUS, FROM HIS OBSERVATIONS OF MANKIND, THAT THERE ARE MANY OF HIS READERS WHO WILL LABOUR ALL THEY CAN TO BRING THESE PAGES INTO DISCREDIT.

ONE whom I ſhall always rank among the number of our beſt Engliſh authors, tells us, in a juſtly eſteemed poem, that—

'Wiſdom is ſtill to ſloth too great a ſlave;
'None are ſo buſy as the fool and knave.'

How widely different are the pictures drawn of a perſon whoſe prudence makes him act and talk with circumſpection and reſerve! How various are the repreſentations made of him! He has almoſt as many characters as there are ſpeakers of him; by the abundance one hears of him the judgment is diſtracted, and there is no forming a right idea of what he truly is. One can go into no company without hearing ſome mention made of Lord Honorius, yet one ſhall ſeldom find any two people agree in their opinion concerning him, either as to his abilities or principles, whether in religious, moral, or political matters. He is no follower of the court, yet does not totally avoid going thither. He profeſſes himſelf a member of the eſtabliſhed church, yet converſes freely with thoſe of different perſuaſions. He liſtens attentively to the arguments urged by perſons of all parties and all ſects, without offering any of his own, or giving his opinion which are wrong or which are right.

For this reaſon all the zealots, both in religion and politicks, brand him with lukewarmneſs, and ſay he is a man of an uncertain way of thinking, and has no ſettled principle of acting. Some few there are who applaud his moderation, but many more who look upon it as a piece of low cunning, thereby to cover ſome latent deſigns he has within his boſom; but of what nature theſe are, I have heard many warm diſputes about. Some will needs have him in the intereſt of the Pretender, and others that he is ſecretly a tool of the miniſtry. Some have confidently averred, that they have ſeen a white roſe carried into his houſe on the tenth of June; and others, that he has worn a yellow waiſtcoat on the birth-day of his preſent Majeſty; as if an innocent flower, or the colour of a piece of ſilk, were ſufficient tokens to ſhew the wiſhes of the wearer's heart.

As to his œconomy in private life, he is not at all expenſive in dreſs, equipage, or the furniture of his houſe; chuſing rather to appear below his rank, than in any particular to exceed it. This is frequently attributed to his covetouſneſs, while more favourable judges ſuppoſe it to be owing to his contempt of the modiſh fopperies of the age. He partakes of all the pleaſures of the town, but never purſues them to an exceſs, or with eagerneſs. The graver ſort of people aſcribe this to his diſcretion, and the more gay to want of ſpirit and coldneſs of conſtitution.

Thus apt are we to form a vain judgment on things we know nothing of. The heart of man is incomprehenſible, unleſs diſcovered by himſelf in ſome glaring proof either of virtue or vice: he firſt he may not have an opportunity to ſet forth in any conſpicuous light, and the latter he may have artifice and hypocriſy enough to gloſs over and conceal. How impoſſible, then, is it to be certain to which of theſe he is in reality devoted!

Among the variety of deſcriptions and reports in relation to Lord Honorius, I found, notwithſtanding, that it was agreed on by all hands, that though he would not ſuffer himſelf to be impoſed upon by his tradeſmen, yet he always took care their bills ſhould be paid with the utmoſt exactneſs and punctuality, and that he never dealt with foreigners. Theſe articles, however inſignificant they may ſeem to ſome of thoſe who call themſelves the polite world, I confeſs gave me ſuch an idea both of his prudence and juſtice, as made me immediately join with thoſe who ſpoke the greateſt things in his praiſe in other reſpects; but being deſirous of penetrating more deeply into the reality of this nobleman's diſpoſition, I reſolved to try how my Inviſibilityſhip would ſerve that end, and accordingly made a viſit one morning at his houſe.

I paſſed through ſeveral neat rooms, the furniture of which was rich, and beſitting the dignity and fortune of the owner, but had nothing of gaudineſs in it. At laſt I found the perſon I went to ſeek; he was in a cloſet within his dreſſing-room, and had a book in his hand. I was curious to ſee what was the ſubject of his meditations; and, looking over his ſhoulder, perceived it was the poems of our Engliſh Pindar, the celebrated Mr. Cowley. The page he was employed in on my entrance contained, among others, theſe lines—

'O fountains! when in you ſhall I,
'Eas'd of unpeaceful thoughts, myſelf eſpy!
'O fields! O woods! when ſhall I be made
'The happy tenant of your ſhade!
'Here's the ſpring-head of pleaſure's flood,
'Where all the riches lie,
'That ſhe has coin'd and ſtamp'd for good,
'To charm the mind as well as eye.
'Pride and ambition here,
'Only in far-fetch'd metaphors appear;
'Here's nought but winds can hurtful murmurs ſcatter,
'And nought but echo flatter.
'The gods, when they deſcended hither
'From heaven, did always chuſe their way;
'And therefore we may boldly ſay,
"That is the way, too, thither."

When he came to this part of the poem, he ſtopped, and cried out with the greateſt emphaſis—'Charming, inimitable Cowley! how juſt, how truly delicate, are 'all thy notions, and how widely different from thoſe of the age I have the 'misfortune to live in! If one may 'form a judgment, as ſure one may, by 'the writings of ſeventy or eighty years 'ago, the genius of Britain was far unlike what it appears at preſent.'

He had ſcarce finiſhed this exclamation, when a ſervant opened the door, and told him that Sir Whimſey Brainſick was come to wait upon him; on which he laid aſide the book, and went into the next chamber to receive his gueſt. After giving and returning the cuſtomary ſalutations of the morning, and having ſeated themſelves, the following dialogue enſued between them—

Honorius. It is a wonder to ſee you dreſſed and abroad thus early, Sir Whimſey; I think you are commonly in your firſt ſleep after this time.

Sir Whimſey. Aye, my lord; but pleaſure muſt on ſome occaſions give way to buſineſs. I have vaſt affairs upon my hands at preſent. I only ſnatched a moment to take leave of your lordſhip, and two hours hence ſhall ſet out for the country.

Honorius. On your election, I ſuppoſe?

Sir Whimſey. No, no; my Lord Triffli Traffli has ſecured me a borough, without my taking the trouble of ever going near it. My buſineſs, at preſent, is down at *******, where I have a conſiderable eſtate, and, I believe, a pretty good intereſt; and I have engaged myſelf to ſtrain both, as far as they will go, in favour of Sir Crafty Shallowbuggen.

Honorius. Sir Crafty Shallowbuggen! What, then, has Mr. Worthy, the preſent member, declined ſtanding?

Sir Whimſey. No, no, my lord, he has not declined; but we are reſolved to have him out, at any rate.

Honorius. I would not have you deceive yourſelf, Sir Whimſey. Mr. Worthy is a gentleman who, I am told, is highly eſteemed by his conſtituents; and you may be at a great deal of expence to oppoſe him, to no purpoſe.

Sir Whimſey.

Sir Whimsey. As to the expence, I don't doubt but it will be made up to me some way or other. I have my eye upon a place; and, I can tell you, am as good as promised either that or a ribband.

Honorius. The character I have heard of Mr. Worthy makes me sorry so powerful an opposition should be set on foot against him.

Sir Whimsey. He has been stubborn, my lord, very stubborn; has voted against the Jew and Clandestine Marriage bills; and it is not fit the ministry should be affronted. Your lordship, I suppose, is a friend to the ministry?

Honorius. Sir, I never gave any man reason to believe I was the contrary.

Sir Whimsey. No, no, your lordship is too wise. Those who are friends to the ministry, are friends to themselves. For my own part, if it were not to oblige them, I would not give two-pence who had the election at ******, or any where else. But I must beg your lordship's pardon; I have a thousand things to dispatch, and would not be waited for by four or five gentlemen who accompany me on the same expedition; so your lordship's most obedient.

Honorius. Yours, Sir Whimsey. I wish you a good journey.

With these words they parted. Lord Honorius saw him to the top of the staircase, and then turned back to his closet, saying to himself as he went—'What 'a wild world is this! How do men 'toil to bring infamy on themselves, 'and entail certain ruin on their poste-'rity!'

As I thought, by the little sample I had seen, that it was now in my power to make a better judgment of the sentiments of this nobleman than by all I had heard from others, I was following Sir Whimsey down stairs; but on hearing some debate between a plain, honest-looking countryman, and a spruce footman, who, as I found afterwards, had been but lately taken into my lord's service, I stopped short to listen to the occasion. I soon perceived that the countryman was desirous of speaking to his lordship; and the fellow, judging by appearances, thought it too great a presumption, and would fain have turned him from the door; but the rustick was not so easily repulsed as the other had imagined. The first words I could hear distinctly were as follow—

Footman. I tell you, friend, I know not whether my lord is at home or not; or, if he is, whether he pleases to be seen: but if you let me know what business you have with him, and from whom you came, I will take care his lordship shall be informed, and you may have your answer to-morrow.

Countryman. Goodlack, Mr. Skip-jack, who are you? My lord is not used to have such malapert fellows about him. But if I must not see my lord, pray let me speak to Mr. Downright, the gentleman that dresses and waits upon him; he knows me well enough, and will give me a better answer.

The footman then vouchsafed to call the person he mentioned, and the countryman had the satisfaction to find himself well received. Mr. Downright shook him cordially by the hand, told him he was glad to see him in London, and asked him what business had brought him hither. To which the other replied—

Countryman. In good troth I did not come upon pleasure; I have business, very great business, with my lord, and would fain speak to him, if so be I may have liberty to come into his presence, as you know, Mr. Downright, I have done many a good time in the country; but that Mr. Finikin there, with his pig-tail wig, stands as it were like a mud-wall to keep every body off the house.

Mr. Downright. Oh, he did not know you, Mr. Goodacre; and besides, he has lived in families where nobody without a coach or chair is admitted. But I will acquaint my lord you are here; he is alone, and I am sure will see you.

Countryman. Thank you, Mr. Downright. It is well there are some civil people in this same town.

Mr. Downright then went on his message: the footman looked very sheepish, and sneaked away; while the countryman strutted about the hall as great as an emperor, till the valet returned, and desired him to walk up. As I took Mr. Goodacre for one of my lord's tenants, and imagined he was only come on the score of renewing a lease, or some other country affairs relating to himself, which I had no manner of curiosity to pry into, I was in some debate within myself whether I should

ſhould ſtay, or go directly out of the houſe, the door being then open; but a certain impulſe, the meaning of which I cannot account for, ſwayed me to purſue my firſt thought, and I turned back and accompanied him into the preſence of my lord, from whom he met with a reception not commonly given by perſons of quality to a man of his plain appearance, except on particular occaſions. His lordſhip made him ſit down in a chair very near himſelf, and, with a ſmiling countenance, and the greateſt affability in his voice and air, told him, he was glad to ſee him look ſo well and hearty; that he hoped his wife and family enjoyed the ſame ſhare of good health; and then aſked what buſineſs had brought him up to London. To the former part of theſe obliging ſpeeches he only anſwered with ſeveral low bows, but to the latter replied in theſe terms—

Goodacre. Why, my lord, your lordſhip knows we are going to have a new parliament, and belike there will be a great buſtle all over the kingdom about elections; and no wonder if there be; every one makes us ſuch fair promiſes when they come to aſk us for our votes, that it is a hard matter to know which we can moſt depend upon. We have been ſerved baſely, very baſely, by ſome of our repreſentatives, and it behoves us to be very cautious for the future.

Honorius. Very true, Mr. Goodacre, it does ſo indeed; and I hope the nation will think ſo.

Goodacre. Now, as to our borough, no man could make finer ſpeeches to us, or pretend he had our intereſt more at heart, than Squire Earnly, before he was choſen; yet he no ſooner got into the Houſe, than he ſhewed he did not care a ſtraw for us, laughed at all our petitions and remonſtrances, and, I am told, made a merit of it to the miniſtry.

Honorius. I am afraid there are too many who have done ſo. Does the ſame gentleman ſet up again?

Goodacre. No, my lord; he would have no chance for it if he did: we know him too well, he ſees that well enough. But it is thought, however, that he will get in for ſome place or other.

Honorius. Nothing more likely. But do you hear who intends to offer himſelf in his ſtead?

Goodacre. Yes, my lord; great intereſt is already making for one Captain Saſhbright. He is as fine a perſon, indeed, as the ſun ſhines upon, but we know nothing of him. He is recommended by Sir Courtly Jobber, and has brought a power of money down with him. They went together in Sir Courtly's coach to ******* fair, bought a many things, and gave them to every body about them. Guineas and broad pieces fly about like hail; any one, almoſt, may have them for picking up.

Honorius. So then he may eaſily carry it, I ſuppoſe?

Goodacre. I cannot tell that, my lord: There was a numerous meeting at the Roſe about a fortnight ago, and Squire Wellwood, of the Green, was put in nomination. His family has been ſettled for a long time at *******; he lives moſt part in the country, does a great deal of good among the poor, and is mainly beloved.

Honorius. I know him, Mr. Goodacre; he is certainly a very worthy gentleman.

Goodacre. Aye, my lord, he would have it all to nothing, if it was not for one conſideration.

Honorius. What is that?

Goodacre. The captain has promiſed that, if he gets his election, he will procure an act of parliament for a new road to be cut, at the government's expence, from ***** to *****, which your lordſhip knows would be a great advantage to our market.

Honorius. A very great one, indeed.

Goodacre. Aye, my lord, if we were ſure it would be done; but there lies the query. Some people will promiſe any thing to gain their point, and never think of it afterwards. We all know Squire Wellwood to be a noble gentleman, and ſo may Captain Saſhbright too; he may, or he may not. Now we are ſtrangely divided in our opinions, whether we ought to leave the certain good for the uncertain better, and have at length reſolved to be decided by your lordſhip.

Honorius. By me!

Goodacre. Yes, my lord. We know your lordſhip to be a wiſe man, and a true lover of your country.

Honorius. I have always thought, Mr. Goodacre, that to meddle in theſe things would prove me deſerving neither of the one nor the other of the epithets you give me. Every elector ought to give his vote according to the dictates of his conſcience, and not ſuffer himſelf to

be

be swayed by any interest or motive whatever; and for a nobleman, or other person of distinction, to attempt, either by menaces or cajolings, to make them act to the contrary, appears to me to be the most gross encroachment on liberty that can be offered.

Goodacre. But here the case is widely different, my lord.

Honorius. I grant it is. You desire my advice as a friend, not submit to be governed by me as a director; it would therefore be ungenerous, and even cruel, in me, to suffer you to be deluded by false pretences, when it is so easily in my power to put you upon your guard against them. In the first place, you ought to consider that Captain Sashbright, whatever his character may otherwise be, is an officer in the army; and, as such, it is his interest to promote the continuance of a standing army, and consequently of those taxes which are necessary for the support of it. In the second, Sir Courtly Jobber, who it seems is the person who recommends him, has for a long time, to my certain knowledge, been an agent for the ministry, and is indebted for his title, and the best part of the estate he is in possession of, merely to the good services he has rendered them.

Goodacre Aye, marry, these things are worth thinking of indeed! So I suppose, my lord, the money he so plentifully throws about is none of his own?

Honorius. Not a doit; he will be reimbursed with interest.

Goodacre. And yet I know not, my lord, but there may be some among us foolish enough to be inveigled by this bait. Alackaday! we country people are ignorant of such practices; we little think what the great folks in town are doing; and a many there are that would not believe a word of it without good authority. Oh, I wish your lordship were down at Egum Hall at this critical juncture!

Honorius. I will be there, Mr. Goodacre, in spite of the aversion I have always had to appear at elections, or to distinguish myself on any occasion. My love to the place which gave me birth, and good-will to my countrymen, shall overbalance all other considerations. I will do all I can to strengthen the weak eyes which are in danger of being dazzled with Sir Courtly's gold, and shew them the false lustre of his fleeting promises.

Goodacre. Heaven bless your lordship!—A noble resolution!

Honorius. When do you return, Mr. Goodacre?

Goodacre. I shall lie but this one night in town, my lord, and set out betime tomorrow morning.

Honorius. I will not be two days behind you: in the mean time, you may tell them what I say.

Goodacre. It will be joyful news to some.

There passed no farther conversation between them; the honest countryman rose up to take his leave, full of transport at the success of his negociation; but Lord Honorius would not permit him to depart, till he had rung the bell for Mr. Downright, and given orders that he should be made welcome to the best entertainment the house afforded. I left him to accept the invitation, and returned to my apartment, well satisfied in my mind that I was now enabled to form a right judgment of this nobleman's principles and disposition.

CHAP. IV.

PRESENTS THE READER WITH THE DETAIL OF A VERY REMARKABLE INCIDENT; WHICH, I BELIEVE, IF CONSIDERED WITH A DUE ATTENTION, THERE ARE BUT FEW PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY OF THE FAIR-SEX, WHO WILL NOT FIND THEMSELVES ENABLED TO BECOME BETTER MEMBERS OF SOCIETY BY HAVING PERUSED.

A Certain sacred writer tell us, that the tongue is an unruly member, and preaches much concerning the government of it; but I dare not presume to insist too much on his authority, as he has been, with others of his cotemporaries, pretty much exploded; and I might be looked upon, by my polite readers, as a very old-fashioned, silly fellow, to make any mention of him. But I may venture, without running the risque of being read with a horse-laugh, to quote the words of another very great and learned person of a more modern date, who says, that the tongue is the most

moſt dangerous of all weapons; that it is capable of deſtroying all peace, all love, all harmony, in the world; of ſowing diſſenſions among families; of diſuniting the hearts of the deareſt friends and relations; of ruining the reputation and fortune of whomſoever it is levelled againſt; and that even murders and the worſt of miſchiefs may be occaſioned by it.

That the tongue, when it becomes the inſtrument of a malicious heart, carries a thouſand daggers in it, is a truth which the obſervation of every one evinces. But this is not all: publick abuſe or private ſcandal, defamation and detraction, are not the only vices of the tongue; an unguarded word is frequently productive of the moſt unhappy conſequences; it wounds, as it were, by chance-medley, and a perſon may be ſtabbed in the moſt tender part without any intention in the giver of the blow. A talkative diſpoſition, or, in other words, a paſſion for repeating every thing one ſees and hears, or even gueſſes at, is extremely dangerous to ſociety; and though it is a foible proceeding rather from levity than ill-nature, ſometimes produces the ſame effects. Thoſe guilty of it, perhaps, may mean no hurt; but, alas! they conſider not how far the perſon to whom they are ſpeaking may be intereſted in the report they make, and that what they imagine of no moment may ſtab him to the quick. Nothing is more common than for people to hurt thus at random; and, by their raſhneſs, to occaſion accidents, which, if they foreſaw, they would be moſt careful to prevent. As a late poet emphatically enough expreſſes it—

'Thinking to ſhoot my arrow o'er the
'houſe,
'I have kill'd my brother.'

But this inadvertency, as great a weakneſs as it doubtleſs is, has in it ſomewhat yet more excuſable than to reveal a ſecret which we are conſcious muſt give the hearer pain. I confeſs that this is ſometimes done through good-will; but then it is a very miſtaken good-will in many caſes. If I know a perſon ſuſtains an injury, and has it in his power to redreſs the grievance, it is certainly my duty to acquaint him with it; but when the evil is without a remedy, it is infinitely more kind to ſuffer him to remain in ignorance. To be well deceived, is almoſt equal to not being deceived at all: our happineſs conſiſts in the imagination of it; and if we firmly believe ourſelves poſſeſſed of what we wiſh, it is the ſame thing as being ſo in reality. How cruel is it, then, for any one to draw back the friendly curtain that hides ill-fortune from us, and compel us to behold our wretchedneſs! Every one who is thus unhappily undeceived, may cry out with Bellamira, in the play—

——————'Ah, cruel friend!
'Why didſt thou wake me from my dream
'of bliſs!
'Why bring me from that ſcene of fancied
'joys,
'To one of real anguiſh, horror, and de-
'ſpair!'

Many unhappy inſtances of theſe well-meant ill offices have come to my knowledge ſince I was in poſſeſſion of the gift of Inviſibility; but I ſhall recite only one of them, which, as it is a very late tranſaction, and but few people know the real truth of, is at preſent a matter of much ſpeculation among thoſe who are any way acquainted with the parties concerned, or have even heard their names.

Meroveus and Deidamia were an extreme happy pair; the railers againſt marriage could find nothing in the conduct of either of them to countenance any ſarcaſms on that ſtate. The moſt tender affection had been the chief, if not the ſole motive of the union between them; and the ſecure and uninterrupted poſſeſſion of each other, inſtead of diminiſhing, ſeemed rather to increaſe their mutual ardour, and their firſt bridal fondneſs appeared in their behaviour after having ſerved a more than ſeven years apprenticeſhip to Hymen. Yet how, on a ſudden, have we ſeen all this ſweet ſerenity turned into ſtorms and tempeſts! Meroveus and Deidamia, who it was thought could not have lived a ſingle week out of each other's preſence, are now parted; according to all probability, parted to meet no more in love.

Beſides the many great accompliſhments which juſtified the affection they ſo long had towards each other, both of them were accounted perſons of an excellent underſtanding and ſolid ſenſe. Nothing, therefore, could have more

amazed

amazed the world, than that they ſhould come to this open rupture; even though ſome little cauſe of complaint had happened either on the one ſide or the other. An event ſo ſtrange, ſo little dreamed of, put all conjecture to a ſtand; people pretended not even to gueſs what ſhould be the occaſion, much leſs to unravel ſo great a myſtery; the accompliſhment of that work was reſerved by fate for the Inviſible Spy alone. The manner in which I made this diſcovery, I ſhall relate as conciſely as the converſation which let me into it will admit of.

As I was one day taking a ſolitary walk on Conſtitution Hill, I ſaw Deidamia leaning on the arm of Eutracia, a lady of birth and fortune, who had been bred up with her at the boarding-ſchool, and ever ſince been her moſt intimate friend and companion. Juſt as they approached the place where I was, the following dialogue began between them—

Deidamia. Now for the ſecret you have to tell me; methinks I have a more than ordinary impatience to hear it, and we cannot be more retired: no living ſoul is near us, and there is no danger of any one coming to interrupt our diſcourſe, as all the world are in the Mall.

Eutracia. I will not keep you long in ſuſpence, my dear; but firſt you muſt anſwer two or three queſtions I have to aſk you, and then reſolve to arm yourſelf with all the fortitude you are miſtreſs of, not to be too much ſhocked at what I ſhall relate.

Deidamia. I cannot conceive that there is any thing which either you or any one elſe can tell me capable of giving me a ſhock. But pray, what is it you would know from me?

Eutracia. The town looks upon you as one of the moſt happy women in it; is it true that you are really ſo?

Deidamia. Indeed, my dear, I think myſelf ſo; and if I would labour to be more bleſſed, know not how to form a ſingle wiſh beyond what I poſſeſs.

Eutracia. There are many private cauſes of diſquiet, which prudence obliges us to conceal. Are you thoroughly convinced of the affection of your huſband?

Deidamia. I never had the leaſt cauſe to doubt it; and the tenderneſs I have for him is ſo ſincere and delicate, as I think would make me eaſily perceive a want of it in him. But wherefore do you aſk? you cannot have any reaſon to ſuſpect him.

Eutracia. Ah, poor Deidamia!

Deidamia. Why do you ſigh, and look ſo piteouſly upon me? Some wretch has certainly belied Meroveus to you.

Eutracia. No. But one more interrogatory, and I have done. Does he never abſent himſelf without letting you know where he goes? never lie out of his own houſe?

Deidamia. Very ſeldom, and that but lately. An intimate friend of his makes his addreſſes to a young lady at Hammerſmith. He frequently deſires my huſband's company with him, and they ſometimes ſtay all night; when having ſupped there, it is dangerous to return to London, as the roads are now infeſted.

Eutracia. How eaſy is it to deceive the innocent!—Meroveus is a villain!

Deidamia. How, Eutracia! a villain! Had any other called him ſo, my reſentment ſhould have ſhewn how much I deſpiſed ſo baſe an accuſation.

Eutracia. Alas! it is your own love and honour makes you ſo tenacious of his, but he is falſe in both; and I again repeat the name, he is a villain! and will put it in your power to prove him ſo, by the teſtimony of your own eyes and ears, provided you promiſe to give him no previous hints, that you have diſcovered, or even ſuſpect his perfidy.

Deidamia. But how—how, Eutracia, is he a villain?

Eutracia. He keeps a miſtreſs; ſome common wench, no doubt: but he adores, doats on her, pretends himſelf her huſband; and thoſe nights when you imagine him at Hammerſmith, he paſſes with her.

The tender Deidamia was now ſo overcome at theſe words, that her ſpirits quite forſook her, and ſhe muſt certainly have fallen on the earth, if they had not happened to be very near a bench, at the lower end of the walk, where Eutracia placed her. The keeper of the gate perceiving her condition, was ſo humane as to run and fetch ſome water, which being ſprinkled on her face, ſoon brought her to herſelf. Eutracia, on ſeeing her fair friend thus agitated, ſeemed, and I believe really was, very much concerned at what ſhe had done; for ſhe could not reſtrain ſome tears from falling down her eyes, while ſhe expreſſed herſelf in theſe terms—

'My dearest Deidamia, if I had not 'thought you would have received this 'intelligence with more moderation, you 'should have been for ever ignorant of 'it.' The afflicted lady made no reply to these words; but in a few minutes growing somewhat more composed, quitted the bench, and leaning on Eutracia, the conversation was renewed in this manner—

Deidamia. Oh, Eutracia! little are you capable of conceiving the agonies this poor, distracted, bleeding heart, sustains! Yet I must know all. Tell me by what means you got information of this horrid secret, and how you are assured of it's veracity.

Eutracia. It was not my intention to conceal any part of it; but you must determine to listen with calmness to me.

Deidamia. I will.

Eutracia. Well, then, I will tell you all. I believe you know Mrs. Flounceit, my mantua-maker.

Deidamia. I saw her once. You may remember I was with you when she brought home your last new sacque.

Eutracia. That woman, you must know, has an interest with some foreign merchants, and can frequently oblige her customers with some curious things which are prohibited to be sold in publick. She came last Monday, and acquainted me that she had several patterns of the most beautiful chintz that ever were seen. I went the next morning in order to see them, and was carried into a back parlour, for the sake of privacy. As I was looking over the goods, I heard a man call from the top of the stair-case, to know if the coach was come. I thought myself perfectly acquainted with the voice, though I could not just then recollect whose it was; but presently after saw Meroveus lead a woman across the garden, at the lower end of which there is a little door that opens into another street. A pebble, or some such thing, happening to lie in the walk, she stumbled in passing; on which he cried out, with the greatest tenderness—'I hope you are not hurt, my 'love!'—'No,' replied she, briskly; 'not at all. I cannot receive any pre'judice when my guardian angel is so 'near.' I was so astonished at what I saw and heard, that I had not power to speak; till Mrs. Flounceit, seeing me look earnestly after them, told me they were her lodgers; that they were lately married; but some reasons obliging them to keep it private, they met each other there only once or twice a week. 'So,' said she, 'I have very little trouble with 'them, and they pay me a good rent.'—'But are you sure,' cried I, 'that 'they are man and wife? It may be 'an intrigue.'—'No,' answered she: 'they were recommended to me by a 'gentleman who formerly lodged with 'me himself, one Sir David Townly.'

Deidamia. Oh Heavens! Sir David Townly! Why he is the very person my husband pretends he goes with to Hammersmith.

Eutracia. It is very likely he may be his confidant in this amour.

Deidamia. Yet still I know not how to think it real; one man may be like another. Are you certain it was Meroveus whom you saw?

Eutracia. As certain as that it is Deidamia to whom I am talking. Did he not lie abroad last Monday night?

Deidamia. He did.

Eutracia. And had he not on a dark brown velver coat, and a black waistcoat trimmed with bugles?

Deidamia. He had. Oh, I can no longer shut my eyes against conviction! The dreadful truth is too glaring to be resisted, and I see myself the most miserable of women!

Eutracia. Do not think so; rather exert the spirit of an injured wife, detect him in his guilt, shame him to repentance, and make him sue for pardon.

Deidamia. Oh that such love as ours has been should come to this!

Eutracia. All may be yet retrieved; your just reproaches may make him loathe his past follies, and become more yours than if he never had transgressed. The next time he takes his pretended journey to Hammersmith, let me know it.

Deidamia. He is gone thither now. Just before you came to call me to the Park, he told me Sir David had engaged his company, and he believed he should not return till morning.

Eutracia. Well, then, he shall be met, my dear Deidamia; he shall be met by those he least expects, or desires to see. I will take you in the morning to Mrs. Flounceit's, under pretence of bringing her a new customer; there you will have the same opportunity I had of discovering your husband's guilt, and

may

may act as you shall judge proper on the occasion.

Deidamia. How shall I contain myself! Base, base man! cruel deceiver of my fond, my unsuspecting heart!—How bear the sight of that vile she! that infamous deluder of his honour! that cursed she who has robbed me of the only treasure I valued upon earth, my husband's love!

Here she burst into the most vehement exclamations. But my Crystalline Remembrancer being already overcharged, I can only say that her behaviour verified the words of Mr. Nat. Lee; who, in his description he gives of the passions of womankind in general, has these lines—

'They shrink at thunder, dread the rust-
'ling wind,
'And glitt'ring swords the brightest eyes
'will blind;
'Yet when strong jealousy enflames the
'soul,
'The weak will rage, and calms to tem-
'pests roll.'

The ladies continued their walk, till Phœbus beginning to withdraw his beams, they both thought proper to retire from the approaching dews. Eutracia, justly apprehending the agitations of her friend would become more violent if left alone and at liberty to indulge them, offered to be her companion that night, which the other gladly accepted, and I saw them take coach together for Deidamia's house, after which I went home.

CHAP. V.

WHICH, ACCORDING TO THE AUTHOR'S OPINION, STANDS IN NO NEED OF A PRELUDE, AS IT CONTAINS ONLY THE SEQUEL OF AN ADVENTURE TOO INTERESTING TO ALL DEGREES OF PEOPLE NOT TO DEMAND THE ATTENTION OF EVERY READER.

I Was truly concerned at the injustice which I perceived poor Deidamia sustained; and but little pleased with Eutracia, either for the information she had given her of it, or for advising her to detect Meroveus in the manner concerted between them: indeed, I feared that the consequences of such an interview would be only to make the husband become more hardened in his guilt, and her affliction increase by finding her resentment disregarded.

Few men can bear reproofs, much less reproaches. If ever they quit a darling folly, the reformation must come of themselves; it must proceed from a consciousness they have done amiss, and not from being told so by others. There is a pride in human nature which disdains admonition, and makes us persist in error, which, if not taken notice of, perhaps in time we might discover to be such, grow ashamed of, and amend. Besides, remonstrances from a person whom we look upon as any way our inferior, either in point of understanding or circumstances, will be so far from having any weight, that they will rather add to our contempt, and, it may be, raise in us an utter aversion to the giver. Custom has made the husband so much the head of the wife, that, tenacious of his authority, it is but seldom he submits to be influenced by her in matters of much less moment to him than his pleasures.

Indeed when a woman is wronged in the manner Deidamia was, it must be confessed that the shock is greatly trying, and that she has the strongest reason for complaining; yet will she still find it most prudent to forbear. Love and gentleness are the only weapons by which that sex can hope to conquer; and she who attempts to have recourse to any other, only hurts herself. By seeming not to suspect her husband's vices, she will, at least, oblige him to keep them as private as he can, and also to treat her with all the respect due to her character, and the sacred union between them; whereas, by growing clamorous and impatient, she furnishes him with a pretence to use her ill, and turns the indifference he before had for her into hatred and detestation.

One of our best poets has an observation on this head, which I think is very well worthy of the serious attention of all who are either injured in reality, or imagine themselves to be so, yet find it their interest to preserve an amicable correspondence with the person guilty of the injury; as it is certain that no man, detected in the thing which he wishes to

conceal, can ever love the perſon by whom he is detected. The words of the author I mentioned are theſe—

' Forgiveneſs to the injur'd does belong;
' But they ne'er pardon who have done the
' wrong.'

Theſe reflections, together with my impatience to ſee how Deidamia would ſupport the full conviction of her huſband's falſehood, ſo much took up my mind, that it was a conſiderable time before I remembered how great an impediment lay between me and the gratification of my curioſity. Mrs. Flounceit's houſe was to be the ſcene of action; and the ladies, during their whole converſation, had made no mention in what ſtreet, nor even in what quarter of the town, that woman lived: however, as I ſuppoſed her to be a noted woman in her buſineſs, I hoped to get over this difficulty; and did ſo, by ſending an emiſſary to enquire among the mercers, hoop-petticoat-makers, and other ſuch people who are employed in the equipments of the ladies: and I went not to bed without receiving the direction I ſtood in need of.

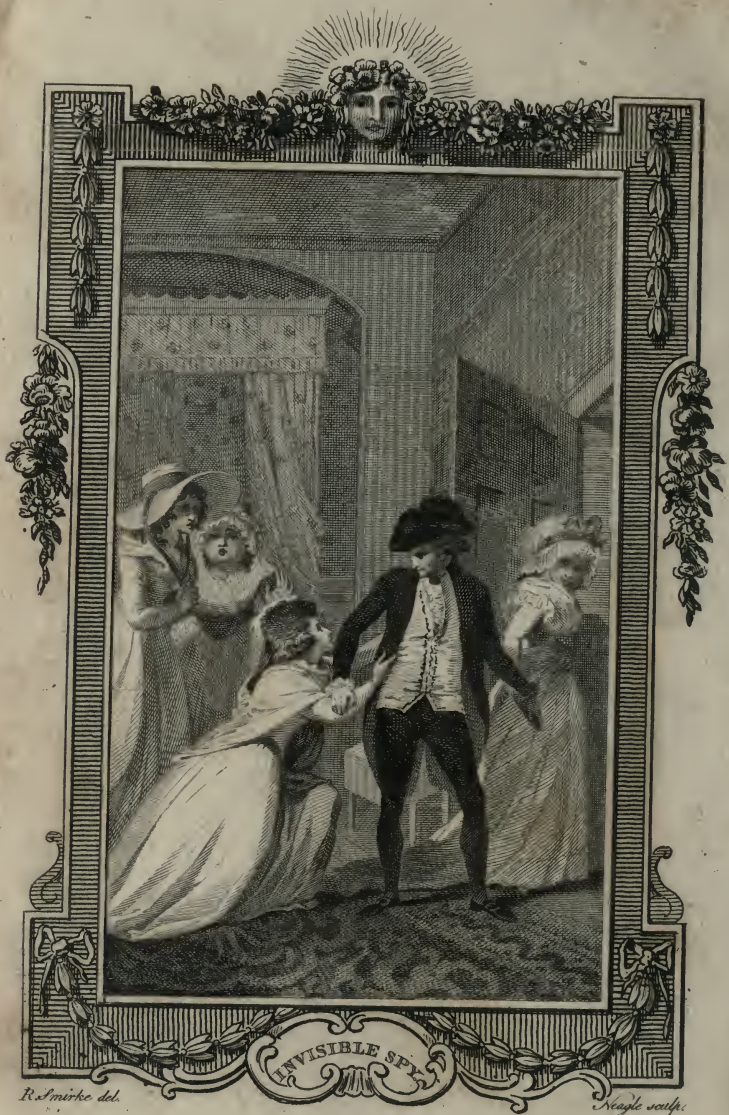
As I knew not the hour in which Meroveus and the partner of his looſer pleaſures would be preparing to depart, nor that in which Deidamia would be conducted by Eutracia to behold this proof of her misfortune, I took care to go very early to Mrs. Flounceit's, and was obliged to wait a conſiderable time before the door happened to be opened to let any one paſs in or out: at laſt, however, it was ſo; I got an opportunity to enter, went into the back-parlour, and poſted myſelf in that corner of it which I thought would be the ſafeſt and moſt commodious. My patience was not here put to any long trial; the ladies arrived a few minutes after I came, uſhered into the room by Mrs. Flounceit, who placed them on a ſettee with a great deal of formal complaiſance, and then made ſome apologies, as many people do when they are dreſſed as well as they can be, for being in ſuch a diſhabille, and not in the order ſhe could wiſh to receive them.

It was eaſy for me to perceive, by Deidamia's countenance, how ill ſhe had paſſed the night; Eutracia alſo ſeemed in ſome agitation, though ſhe diſſembled it as well as ſhe was able; and after giving ſome ſlight anſwer to Mrs. Flounceit's compliments, told her ſhe had brought a friend to look over ſome of her fine things; on which the mantua-maker immediately opened a large preſs, and brought out ſeveral pieces of chintz, with ſome French brocades, and rich Italian ſilks; theſe ſhe ſpread upon a table, accompanying that action with many praiſes on the beauty and curioſity of each. But it was in vain ſhe boaſted, in vain ſhe magnified; all ſhe ſaid, as well as the real merit of the goods ſhe exhibited to ſale, was wholly loſt on Deidamia; the mind of that afflicted lady was too much bent on thoſe things which ſhe expected to be witneſs of, to have any eyes or ears for thoſe which were not preſent to her: ſhe took up firſt one piece, and then another, but without ſeeming to know what ſhe did; and had ſomething ſo diſtracted in her air and geſtures, that Eutracia was obliged to keep Mrs. Flounceit in diſcourſe, to prevent her taking any notice of it. Her behaviour, joined with my knowledge of the cauſe, reminded me of Mr. Dryden's words; which, if ſhe had been inclined to think of poetry, ſhe might pretty juſtly have applied to her own condition in this criſis—

' Love, juſtice, nature, pity, and revenge,
' Have kindled a wildfire in my breaſt;
' I am all a civil war within,
' And, like a veſſel ſtruggling in a ſtorm,
' Require more hands than one to keep me
' upright.'

But if ſhe was ſo little able to ſupport the bare idea of the ſhock ſhe came on purpoſe to receive, what muſt ſhe endure when ſuſpenſe, and all the remains of hope, were ſwallowed up in the cruel certainty of her misfortune, and conviction left no farther room for doubt? The maid of the houſe came into the room with a chocolate-pot in her hand, and told her miſtreſs that the gentleman and lady above ſtairs gave their compliments, and deſired the favour of her company to breakfaſt with them. Mrs. Flounceit was about to make ſome anſwer to this invitation, when Deidamia, not able to contain herſelf, flew out of the parlour, and directly up ſtairs, where ſhe found Meroveus and a young woman ſitting on the ſide of the bed they had but lately quitted.

Deidamia



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Deidamia had ſcarce entered the chamber, when ſhe ſurprized the guilty pair with theſe words—'I have a right, Sir, 'to think my company ought to be as 'acceptable to Meroveus as that of Mrs. 'Flounceit, or any other woman.'

Eutracia had followed Deidamia as faſt as ſhe could, in order, I ſuppoſe, to prevent any deſperate effects of her preſent paſſion, and I was not far behind. But it will be more eaſy for the reader to conceive the ſurprize which appeared in the looks of Meroveus, than for me to expreſs it; he ſtarted up, and, with a voice which the various emotions of his mind rendered almoſt unintelligible, ſaid to her—

Meroveus. Confuſion! Deidamia! —Madam, what brings you here?

Deidamia. That is a queſtion which ought rather to be put to you. I came in purſuit of an ungrateful, too much beloved huſband: you to indulge a lawleſs flame for an abandoned proſtitute!

Meroveus. Madam, Madam, this does not become you!

Deidamia. Does it become you, Sir, to leave your honeſt home and wife, make pitiful excuſes for your abſence, and ſkulk in corners with a wretch like this—this abject hireling of licentious wiſhes!

Miſtreſs. Madam, I would not have you think I am any ſuch perſon: I did not know Meroveus was a married man.

Deidamia. 'Tis falſe, vile creature! You could not know Meroveus, without knowing he had a wife; a wife who, without boaſting, is every way his equal. But get out of my ſight, that I may have liberty to aſk my perjured huſband what he could ſee in that face of yours to be preferred to mine.

On this Meroveus was opening his mouth to ſpeak, but was prevented by Mrs. Flounceit; who being aſtoniſhed on the lady's running up ſtairs, and by the noiſe ſhe immediately heard above, had hobbled up as faſt as her fat would give her leave, and came into the room that moment, crying as ſhe entered—

Mrs. Flounceit. Bleſs me! what is the matter here?

Deidamia. Perhaps, Madam, you are ignorant that your houſe is made a brothel?

Mrs. Flounceit. O, my ſtars!—A brothel! Heaven forbid!

Eutracia. My friend tells you true, indeed. She is the lawful wife of that gentleman; they have been married above ſeven years; I was preſent at their wedding; and that woman, there, is no better than a proſtitute.

Mrs. Flounceit. O the vile ſlut!—I wonder Sir David Townly ſhould offer to bring me into this ſcrape; he knows very well I never countenance ſuch doings.—Huſſey, get out of my houſe this minute!

In ſpeaking this, ſhe advanced towards the miſtreſs of Meroveus, and was about to puſh her out of the room; but that gentleman, perceiving her intent, ſtepped between; and with a viſage all enflamed with wrath, ſaid—'Hold, Ma-'dam, hold! This lady has put her-'ſelf under my protection, and I will 'take care to defend her from all in-'ſults whatſoever.' Then turning to Deidamia, went on thus—'As for you, 'Madam, you have only expoſed me, 'and undone yourſelf. I will never 'ſee you more!' He then took his trembling miſtreſs by the hand, to lead her down ſtairs: Deidamia, in the utmoſt agony of ſpirit, followed him; and catching him by the arm, cried out to him—'Oh ſtay, Meroveus! You will 'not, ſure, add injury to injury! Stay, 'I conjure you, and let that woman 'go!' To which he replied—'Stand 'off, Madam! Your touch is now 'more hateful to me than ever it was 'agreeable; ſo leave you to repent the 'cauſe.'

This cruel rebuff not making her let go the hold ſhe had taken of him, he threw her off with the greateſt contempt, and in an inſtant was out of the houſe with his diſſolute companion; who was, doubtleſs, as haſty as himſelf to get from a place where ſhe could expect nothing but affronts. Deidamia would have purſued her ungenerous huſband, perhaps even into the ſtreet, had ſhe not been withheld by Eutracia, who endeavoured to convince her how little it would avail to remonſtrate any thing to him whilſt he continued in this humour.

Rage had till now kept up the ſpirits of this unhappy lady; but the objects of it being removed, and the power of reflecting returned, ſhe ſunk into a grief no leſs immoderate; ſhe wept, ſhe wrung her hands, beat her lovely breaſt, ſhe ſwooned ſeveral times, and in her intervals of ſenſe could only cry out—'Cru-'el, barbarous Meroveus! Unfaithful, 'ungenerous

'ungenerous husband! Good Heaven! 'for what unknown transgression am I 'become thus miserable!' Neither Eutracia nor Mrs. Flouncein omitted any thing in their power which they thought might serve to give her consolation, but all they could do was insufficient; and it was some hours before she was enough recovered even to be carried home. As soon as she was, Eutracia went with her in the coach; and I walked home, touched to the very soul at the sight of her distress.

I have already given the reader my opinion concerning the extreme folly of revealing unwelcome secrets to our friends; so shall forbear adding any farther reflections on that head, and proceed, with as much brevity as the story will admit, to the catastrophe of this unhappy adventure.

I went the next morning to the house of Meroveus, and was convinced, by what I heard the servants say among themselves, that he had not been at home that night; which, indeed, I feared would be the case. On my going up stairs, I found Deidam a lying on a couch, in a very dejected, melancholy posture. Eutracia was sitting near her; that lady, it seems, having never quitted her since the unfortunate visit they made together at Mrs. Flouncein's. But as the discourse between them consisted only of complaints on the one side, and persuasions to moderation on the other, I think it not material enough to be inserted. I had not been in the room above a quarter of an hour, before a servant presented a letter to Deidamia; it was from her husband, and contained these lines—

'MADAM,

'I Am determined to live easy, which I 'am certain is utterly impracticable 'for me to do with you, after what 'passed yesterday between us. What I 'then said in heat of passion, I now 'repeat in cool blood, and on the 'most mature deliberation. In fine, 'an eternal disunion must be the conse-'quence of your behaviour, nor should 'the tongues of angels dissuade me 'from this resolution: you will do well 'to bear it with patience, as the misfor-'tune, if it may be one, has happened 'entirely through your own fault.

'To leave you no just reason to com-'plain, I shall order the jointure, settled 'on you by our marriage articles, to 'be regularly paid to you, as though I 'were no more; and shall resign to you 'all the plate, linen, and household fur-'niture, excepting only my books, the 'India chest and bureau in my dres-'sing room.

'As to our children, the boy I shall 'take under my care, the girl I leave 'to yours; and shall also add one hun-'dred pounds per annum to the above-'mentioned jointure, for her mainte-'nance and education.

'Farewel for ever!—As we no more 'must meet in love, it will be highly 'improper, and I think could not be 'very agreeable to either of us, to meet 'at all; I shall therefore refrain, as 'much as possible, going to any of those 'places you are accustomed to frequent, 'and hope you will have prudence 'enough to take the same precaution in 'avoiding me, especially when I tell 'you, that it is the only thing in which 'you can now oblige your ill-treated 'husband,

'MEROVEUS.

'P. S. I shall send to-morrow 'for the things I mentioned.'

My fair readers will be the best judges of what Deidamia felt on finding her husband had taken a resolution which could not but give the most mortal stab both to her love and pride. She paused a little after having read it, then gave it to Eutracia, crying out at the same time, with the greatest emphasis—'See there, 'my dear Eutracia, this wicked hus-'band is the sole aggressor, yet pretends 'to be the person who has reason to 'resent!' That young lady, who was all fire and spirit could not forbear loading Meroveus with reproaches at the end of every paragraph she read; and when she had finished, said to Deidamia—

Eutracia. And how, my dear, do you intend to proceed with this base, this most injurious man?

Deidamia. Indeed I know not.

Eutracia. If I were in your place, I would write him such an answer as should make his ears tingle.

Deidamia. Alas, you know not what it is to be a wife!—But I will write, however.

She then rung her bell for the footman, and asked whether the person who brought the letter waited for an answer.

Footman.

Footman. No, Madam, he only bid me deliver it into your own hands, and told me my master ordered me to come to him about two hours hence at George's Coffee-house, and bring some linen with me.

Deidamia. 'Tis very well. But do not go till I have spoke to you again; I have a message to send by you.

The fellow assured her he would not fail to obey her commands, and withdrew; after which she sat down to her escritoire, took pen and paper, and began to write in the following terms—

'Cruel and unjust, yet still dear MEROVEUS!

'IF there needed any other proof than 'that shameful one I yesterday was 'witness of, that I am miserable in the 'total loss of your affection, the letter 'I have just now received would be a 'convincing one. What! after seven 'years conjugal tenderness, perfect and 'sincere on my side, and well dissembled 'on yours, can you entertain a thought 'of parting? of tearing a family to 'pieces which has hitherto lived so re'spectable in the world? Must I be 'doomed to mourn a husband's loss 'even while that husband lives? Must 'my son be bred an alien to his mother, 'and my daughter a stranger to her fa'ther? O think, Meroveus! and if no 'consideration of me has any weight, 'let that of your own reputation, and 'the interest of our children, prevail on 'you to alter this cruel resolution! We 'may at least live civilly together, if not 'with the same fondness as before this 'accident. Yet why should we not? I 'am willing to meet you more than half 'way in love. You cannot deny but 'you have wronged me in the most ten'der point. I confess I was too rash 'in the manner of detecting you. We 'both have been to blame. What is 'done cannot be recalled, but it may 'be repented of: let us exchange for'giveness, and endeavour to forget what 'is past.

'There was a time when every little 'ailment felt by your Deidamia gave 'equal pain to you; oh! can you then 'throw off at once all pity, all huma'nity, all remorse, for the agonies you 'cannot but be sensible my poor tor'mented heart now labours under! 'No, 'tis impossible! reason, honour, 'and good-nature, forbid it! You will 'return, accept the pardon I shall with 'joy bestow; and in return, vouchsafe 'me yours. Let not my hopes deceive 'me; I am sure they will not, if you 'will suffer yourself to reflect seriously 'on the unhappy consequences that must 'infallibly attend a separation from her 'who ever has been, and does and will con'tinue, with the greatest sincerity, your 'most faithful, and most affectionate 'wife,

'DEIDAMIA.'

This she communicated to Eutracia, who approved of the former part of it, but highly condemned the latter, as thinking it too submissive. Deidamia, however, was of a different opinion; and the footman coming in soon after to know her commands, she sealed it up, and put it into his hands to deliver to his master; bidding him say withal, that she was very much indisposed.

After he was gone, the ladies began to enter into some dispute concerning the authority of a husband, and the duty that was expected from a wife; but as I could promise myself no farther information by their discourse on this subject, and, besides, remembering that I had some business of my own to dispatch, I left the place that instant, not without an intention to return thither the next day. Accordingly I went in the morning, and found poor Deidamia almost drowned in tears, and walking backwards and forwards in one of her rooms in a distracted posture. The cause of these fresh agonies I easily perceived by a letter which lay open on the table; the contents whereof were as follow—

'MADAM,

'I Have been in some debate within 'my mind, whether to answer your 'epistle in the manner I now do, or not 'to answer it at all, would be the most 'effectual means to prevent your giv'ing me or yourself any future trouble. 'You find I have pursued the former of 'these methods, and hope you will 'have discretion enough not to involve 'me in a second dilemma on this score. 'Be assured, I did not resolve on a final 'separation without having well weighed 'the consequences attending it, and find 'them such as can no way come in com'petition with my peace of mind; with'out which life would be a curse, my 'bed a bed of thorns, my table a de'sart,

'fart, my houſe a hell, and every friend 'that came to viſit, a fury to torment 'me.

'See the reverſe your jealous folly 'has occaſioned! tax me not, therefore, 'with ingratitude. A thouſand times 'you have confeſſed you thought your-'ſelf as happy as a woman could be, 'and it is certain you were truly ſo. 'During the whole courſe of the years 'we lived together, you never had the 'leaſt ſhadow of a cauſe to complain of 'my want either of reſpect or tender-'neſs. If I indulged any pleaſures 'which I imagined would give you diſ-'quiet, I took care to be very private 'in them. Why, then, did you ſuffer 'yourſelf to be led by an idle curioſity 'to pry into ſecrets which the diſcovery 'of muſt give you pain, and poſſibly 'prove the total deſtruction of that love 'which once you called your greateſt 'bleſſing?

'It is doubtleſs beſt for both of us, 'as you rightly enough obſerve, to for-'get what is paſt; but am far from thinking it can be done by the way 'you mean. No, to forget can only 'be accompliſhed by avoiding each 'other's preſence, and ceaſing all kind 'of communication between us. I ſhall 'therefore give orders to my ſervant to 'charge himſelf with no letter or meſ-'ſage you may think fit to ſend; and 'deſire you will aſſure yourſelf, that this 'is the very laſt you ever ſhall receive 'from me. Farewel. I wiſh you all 'happineſs in any other ſphere of life 'than that you lately lived in with

'MEROVEUS.'

After having examined this epiſtle, I liſtened to what paſſed between Eutracia and Deidamia: but, though I ſtaid till my Tablets were crouded, I ſhall forbear inſerting the particulars of theſe ladies diſcourſe, for reaſons which will be hereafter explained; and only ſay in general, that Eutracia would fain have ſpirited up her friend to reſentment and diſdain againſt a huſband whom ſhe thought ſo unworthy of her; that Deidamia's love overcame her ſex's pride; and, in fine, that the one argued like a virgin, and the other like an affectionate wife. Whether Deidamia made any further attempts to move her obdurate huſband to a reconciliation, I cannot be poſitive; but believe ſhe did not, for ſhe retired ſoon after into the country, whence ſhe is but lately returned; and, whatever her heart may endure, has very much regained her uſual compoſure of countenance and behaviour.

CHAP. VI.

IS SOMEWHAT MORE CONCISE THAN ORDINARY, BUT TO THE PURPOSE; AND WILL BE FOUND NOT THE LEAST WORTHY OF ANY IN THE BOOK OF BEING REGARDED WITH ATTENTION.

AS during the courſe of theſe lucubrations I have been extremely circumſtantial in the reports I have made, the reader has a right to be ſurprized that I omitted the diſcourſe between Deidamia and Eutracia; I ſhall, therefore, according to my promiſe, relate my motive for ſo doing, and flatter myſelf it is ſuch as will render me perfectly excuſable in this point. Much about the time of the adventure related in the two preceding chapters, I happened to be witneſs of a converſation which, though between different perſons, and on a very different occaſion, was ſtill on the ſubject of marriage, the authority of a huſband, and the ſubmiſſion expected from a wife; I left out the former, and made choice of the latter, as of the two the moſt intereſting.

Two ſiſters, whoſe characters I preſent to the publick under the names of Flavia and Celemena, have both of them a tolerable ſhare of beauty, but no other qualification, either natural or acquired, that could entitle them to the hope of an elevated ſtation; yet, by the benevolent aſpect of their happy planets, are they become the brides of Alcandor and Thelamont, perſons diſtinguiſhed in the world by their birth and fortune, and ſtill more ſo by the greatneſs of their merit. Theſe nuptials, ſo aſtoniſhing to the town, and which happened ſoon after one another, gave me a curioſity to diſcover, by the help of my Inviſibility, in what faſhion the ladies would behave themſelves in a ſphere of life ſo altogether new to them, and ſo little expected, even in their vaineſt wiſhes, ever to arrive at.

Flavia was the eldeſt, and it was to her I made my firſt viſit. She was in her dreſſing-room, ſitting at her toilet, with

with her waiting-maid behind her, giving the finishing stroke to her head-tire. Thelamont was also there, and stood leaning his elbow on a bureau, with a good deal of dissatisfaction in his countenance; while she kept looking in the glass, and, without turning her head towards him, said—

Flavia. Pr'ythee, Thelamont, let us talk no more of this stuff; I am quite sick of it. I am certainly the best judge of these things, and it is in vain to persuade me, for I will not be contradicted.

Thelamont. You will not, then, oblige me?

Flavia. Positively no; not when you intermeddle in these affairs.

Thelamont. Well, then, Madam, I shall say no more; but must tell you, that I thought I had a right to expect this proof of your complaisance.

With these words he flung out of the room, and she said to herself—

Flavia. Pish! was there ever any thing so teazing! Men are mighty foolish sometimes.—Catharine, bring me my gauze handkerchief.

Maid. Oh, Ma'am, did not your ladyship say you would wear your new tippet to day?

Flavia. Hah!—Yes—no—it will shew too much of my neck.

Maid. Oh, Ma'am, your ladyship cannot shew too much of so beautiful a part.

Flavia. That's true: but I scratched one of my breasts with a pin this morning.

Maid. Oh the ugly pin! I wish I knew which it was, that I might crook it quite double, and throw it in the fire.

Just as the maid had expressed her resentment against the weapon that had wounded her mistress, Celemena came into the room; and, after saluting her sister with a freedom suitable to the nearness of their blood and friendship, said to her—

Celemena. What is the matter, my dear sister? You do not look pleased today.

Flavia. Umph! No, not very well pleased; nor, indeed, much displeased.

Celemena. I met Thelamont going out as I came in. I thought he seemed more reserved than usual, and in a very ill humour.

Flavia. If he chuses to be so, it would be a pity any one should attempt to put him out of it.

Celemena. I hope no misunderstanding has happened between you?

Flavia. No, no, we understand one another pretty well. I understand that he would fain pretend to take upon him the government of my actions, and he understands that I will not let him do it; so we have exchanged a few words this morning, that's all.

Celemena. Have a care, sister; quarrels in the beginning of marriage promise but little felicity in the continuance of that state.

Flavia. That's true: but it is very provoking when a man will needs interfere in things he has no manner of concern with.

Celemena. Pray, what is the subject of your dispute, if it be not too great a secret?

Flavia. Why, you must know, he wants me to leave off putting any carmine upon my cheeks, calls it nasty daubing, and says I should be a thousand times handsomer without it.

Celemena. I can see nothing extraordinary in all this. There are many men who have an utter aversion to a woman's using any art to her complexion.

Flavia. They may cry out against it; but yet I am sure it is frequently owing to art that they fall so much in love with us. A little red upon the cheeks gives a sparkle to the eyes, and a lustre to the features, which otherwise would appear flat and languid. But they are so foolish as not to consider this; they like us as they see us altogether; and though they may be sensible we are painted, never once imagine it is to that necessary auxiliary to beauty that we are chiefly indebted for those charms which attract their admiration.

Celemena. Suppose it as you say, which, however, I am far from allowing to be always the case, Thelamont has now seen you such as Nature made you: the night wears off that borrowed lustre, and the morning shews you what you truly are; and if he approves of you in this light, I know of no other person whom you need be studious to please.

Flavia. I am of a quite different opinion. O the joy of being gazed at and followed by a whole crouded Mall!

Celemena. Perhaps to laugh: but if sincere, a very empty joy, and what a married woman ought not to be too ambitious of.

Flavia. So, then, you would have

me comply with my husband's request?

Celemena. Indeed I would advise you to it. I am sure, if Alcandor expressed a desire that I should cut off my hair, and never let it grow again, though it is the gift of Nature, and bestowed upon us as the greatest ornament of our sex, I would not hesitate one moment to oblige him.

Flavia. Then you are a fool.

Celemena. In this point I do not think I am: for besides that duty which the law exacts from every wife to her husband, there are other reasons which would oblige me to refuse nothing to Alcandor.

She accompanied these words with a very significant look; which Flavia observing, ordered her maid, who had been all this time in the room, to withdraw; and, as soon as she was gone, replied to what her sister had said in these terms—

Flavia. I know not what you would say; you would infer that, because Alcandor and Thelamont married us without fortunes, we are therefore bound to be their slaves.

Celemena. Not so: and I dare believe, that neither of them will ever require any submissions from us but such as, if we had always been their equals, would very well become us to grant.

Flavia. Laird! what a bustle you make about equals! Whatever we were before, marriage has made us now their equals; and, for my own part, I shall never submit to do any thing Thelamont requires of me, unless my own inclination happens to concur.

Celemena. Oh, sister, I am amazed to hear you talk in this manner! Have you been married but one month, and can already forget the unhappiness of our single state; our scanty and precarious dependance; the difficulties we found to supply ourselves with even the common necessaries of life? We made, indeed, a kind of tawdry shew when we appeared abroad; but how did we pinch for it at home! Is there no love, no gratitude, due from us to men who have raised us to opulence, grandeur, and respect!

Flavia. Pish! they married us to please themselves, not out of pity to us. But let us have no more of this dull stuff. You must go with me to Mrs. Rakelove's route to-night; it is the first she has had, and I promised her to bring all the company I could.

Celemena. Indeed you must excuse me.

Flavia. For what reason?

Celemena. Alcandor sups at home, and I cannot be abroad.

Flavia. Heavens! how strangely silly you are grown!—Alcandor sups at home! What then? he did not marry you to make you a cook! You do not dress his victuals?

Celemena. No; but he married me to make me a companion at his victuals: and while he continues to desire my presence, as I flatter myself he always will, I shall never form any pretences to be absent.

The face of Flavia grew more red than the carmine had made it, on finding in her sister sentiments so opposite to her own; but was prevented from making any answer by the entrance of a servant, who told her that some ladies were come to visit her; on which she went, accompanied by Celemena, into the dining-room, in order to receive them. Thus ended the conversation I mentioned; and by it the reader may judge which of these two sisters had the greatest share of prudence, best deserved her good fortune, and was most likely to enjoy a long continuance of it.

CHAP. VII.

PRESENTS THE ACCOUNT OF AN INCIDENT WHICH CANNOT BUT BE DEEPLY AFFECTING TO THE YOUTH OF BOTH SEXES, AND NO LESS REMARKABLE IN IT'S EVENT THAN ANY THE AUTHOR'S INVISIBILITYSHIP EVER ENABLED HIM TO DISCOVER.

AMONG all the various deceptions which are carried on in this great world, I know of none more cruel, and more liable to be attended with the worst of consequences, than those practised in the affairs of love; yet it is a crime which passes with impunity, and is scarce censured by any but the persons injured by it, and their particular friends and confidants. Even the ladies, generally speaking, for there is no rule without exceptions, are so little the friends of each other, that we rarely find

find them taking up the quarrel of their ſex in this point; on the contrary, they are apt to abſolve the vow-breaker, and let the whole blame fall on the believer. A man who has triumphed over the credulity of an hundred women, ſees himſelf not leſs reſpected; and ſometimes the number of paſt conqueſts ſhall ſerve him as a recommendation, and be a means of his attaining new ones. Perjury is deemed but a venal tranſgreſſion in this caſe; few think that oaths and imprecations, when dictated by the heart of an amorous inclination, though formed in the moſt binding terms, and uttered in the moſt ſolemn manner, are ever regiſtered in heaven.

This vice, as I muſt take the liberty to call it, is not, however, wholly confined to the male ſex; I am ſorry to obſerve, that thoſe of the other, either through pride, vanity, or an inconſtancy of nature, are ſometimes found guilty of deluding their lovers with fallacious expectations. I hope alſo to be forgiven by the more diſcreet part of womankind, when I ſay that a propenſity to ſuch a behaviour is yet leſs excuſable in them than in the men; as a perfect innocence, a ſweetneſs of diſpoſition, and a ſimplicity of manners, are, or ought to be, the diſtinguiſhing characteriſticks of the fair-ſex.

A young lady, to whom I ſhall give the name of Syrenia, was endowed by nature with every requiſite to command love and admiration; ſhe had fine eyes, a regular ſet of features, fine hair, and a moſt delicate complexion; was tall, well-ſhaped, and had ſomewhat peculiarly attractive in her air. Fortune had not been altogether ſo propitious to her; through the extravagancies of her parents, ſhe was left in poſſeſſion of a very moderate fortune: it was, however, entirely at her own diſpoſal, and ſufficient, with the good œconomy ſhe was miſtreſs of, to ſuppport her in a very genteel, though not a grand way of life.

Propoſals of marriage had often been made to her by ſeveral eminent and wealthy citizens; but ſhe rejected them all, and deſpiſed the thoughts not only of a ſhop, but alſo of all other callings and occupations whatever. Ambition was the predominant paſſion of her ſoul; and ſhe had vanity enough to think that her birth, her perſon, and accompliſhments, were ſuch as might very well compenſate for the ſmallneſs of her fortune, and entitle her to higher expectations.

She had lived till the age of twenty-three without having any offer of the kind ſhe hoped; but about the expiration of that æra, a young gentleman, named Roſſano, happening to ſee her at the houſe of a relation whom he viſited, became violently in love with her; and ſoon after finding means to get himſelf introduced, made a declaration of his paſſion; to which, knowing what and who he was, ſhe gave all the encouragement he could wiſh, or that was befitting the character of a modeſt woman. It would, indeed, have been much to be wondered at, if the addreſſes of Roſſano had not been acceptable to her: he is deſcended from a very ancient and worthy family; has an eſtate of eight hundred pounds per annum, entirely free from any incumbrance, either mortgage, dowry, or portions to be paid out of it; his perſon and behaviour are extremely agreeable; and, to add to all this, has deſervedly the reputation of a man of ſtrict honour, and more ſobriety than could be expected from his years and the diſſoluteneſs of the preſent times.

The ſincerity and warmth of his affection making him very ſtrenuous in his preſſures, and the advantages ſhe found in a match with him rendering her complying, they were beginning to talk of ordering articles for their marriage to be drawn up; when an unexpected accident, relating to his eſtate, obliged him to go immediately into the country. Though he propoſed to ſtay but a ſhort time, yet he could not think of being deprived of the ſight of his beloved Syrenia, even for a few weeks, without an infinity of grief. She teſtified little leſs regret for this enforced ſeparation: their parting was extremely moving; each ſeemed to endeavour to outvie the other in expreſſions of tenderneſs; and the only conſolation he had was, the repeated aſſurances ſhe gave him, that wherever he went he carried her heart along with him.

It is highly probable, that the affection ſhe profeſſed for him was at that time perfectly ſincere, and that ſhe looked upon the accident which delayed the celebration of their nuptials as no inconſiderable misfortune to her; but whatever chagrin ſhe might feel at firſt on this account, it was very ſoon diſſi-

pated, and gave way to ideas of a far different nature. The motive which brought about so sudden and so extraordinary a change in her sentiments, I shall relate, as I was afterwards fully informed of it by the several conversations I was present at by the help of my Invisibility.

She was one morning in the Park with a lady of her acquaintance called Delia, where they were met and joined by a young officer, brother to Delia, and a gentleman who was with him, and equally a stranger to both the ladies, but behaved towards them with the greatest respect and politeness. They walked two or three turns up and down the Mall; after which the gentlemen took their leave, and Syrenia and Delia went to their respective habitations, without thinking any more of what had passed. Little, indeed, could either of them apprehend the consequences of this adventure: but the next day, early in the forenoon, Syrenia was surprized with a visit from Delia; who came running into her apartment without any ceremony, crying out as she entered—

Delia. Joy to you, my dear! I come to wish you joy!

Syrenia. Of what? for I see no other subject of joy than what I always feel on seeing you.

Delia. Me! No, no; a thousand such as me are quite out of the question: but I have the pleasure to congratulate you on the greatest conquest your beauty ever made, or perhaps ever can make!

Syrenia. You are got into a vein of raillery this morning.

Delia. No, upon my honour I never was more serious. Do you not remember the fine gentleman that was with my brother yesterday in the Mall?

Syrenia. Yes; you know they joined company with us.

Delia. His name is Leontine; he is the eldest son of his father, and heir apparent to three thousand pounds a year. You saw his person; for my part, I think nothing can be more agreeable: and my brother tells me he is the most accomplished man he ever knew.

Syrenia. Well, and what is all this to me?

Delia. It is all to you. It seems he saw you last Sunday at Westminster Abbey, fell violently in love with you, and would have followed to have seen where you lived, but was prevented by some gentlemen of his acquaintance, who that instant laid hold of him, and forced him along with them.

Syrenia. 'Tis possible such a one might be there; but I did not take notice of him.

Delia. That may be; but he took so much of you, as not to be able to sleep ever since.

Syrenia. Very romantick, truly! But, pray, how came you so well acquainted with the secrets of his heart, who yesterday seemed an utter stranger to his person?

Delia. I will tell you the whole affair, as my brother last night came and informed me of it. After they had left us, they went and dined together at a tavern. Leontine asked a thousand questions concerning your family, your fortune, and your character; all which, you may be sure, were answered not to your disadvantage. He then made my brother the confidant of the passion you had inspired him with, and intreated him to use his interest with me, as he found I was pretty intimate with you, to engage me to introduce him to you, which I have faithfully promised to do.

Syrenia. What! without my consent?

Delia. I hoped to be forgiven. Such an offer, my dear, is not to be rejected.

Syrenia. It is much beyond my expectations, I must confess; but the disparity between our fortunes is too great.

Delia. If he thinks your person an equivalent, it is not your business to make objections.

Syrenia. That is true: and if I could flatter myself he were really sincere—— But I will consider of it.

Delia. It will be time enough for you to consider, when you have heard what he has to say; for I have promised to bring you together this evening.

Syrenia. This evening! As how?

Delia. As thus: I invite you to sup with me to-night; my brother and Leontine shall come in, as if by accident. Neither your pride nor your modesty has any thing to scruple; for I assure you I will not let even my brother know that I have previously acquainted you with any thing of the matter.

Syrenia. Well, on that condition I will come.

Delia. Indeed, my dear, I should think you very much to blame to turn your back on a prospect so highly advantageous;

advantageous; for though you are well born, well-accomplished are handsome, and have some fortune of your own, yet the three first of these, as men now think of marriage, weigh but lightly against what they call the incumbrance of a wife; and as to the latter, you know it will not entitle you to a coach and six.

Syrenia. The justice of what you say cannot be denied; but I would do nothing that should occasion my character being called in question, nor would seem too forward, though to promote the highest expectations: therefore, my dear Delia, remember I depend on your prudence.

Delia. In this you safely may. I know too well what is owing to my sex, and the cruel aspersions men are apt to throw on our most innocent freedoms, not to be extremely cautious in avoiding giving the least room for censure.

Syrenia. Indeed, my dear, my observation on your own conduct ought to put to silence all my doubts on that score; and, whatever is the event of this affair, I shall always gratefully acknowledge your good wishes towards me.

Delia. If it succeeds, I shall be a sharer in your good fortune; as nothing gives me a more sensible satisfaction, than to have it in my power to contribute to the happiness of my friends. But I must leave you: I promised to let my brother know whether you could come or not, that he may apprize Leontine of it.

The good-natured Delia, who did not know how far Syrenia had gone with Rossano, went away in speaking these words: but I could easily perceive, by the glow on Syrenia's cheeks, how much she was transported with the purpose of her visit; and was yet more confirmed of her being so, by some disjointed soliloquies she uttered when she thought there was no witness of what she said. 'Three thousand pounds a year, 'and so fine a gentleman as Leontine! 'so handsome, so polite, so every thing 'that is agreeable! If he is as sincere as 'Delia imagines him to be, I shall have 'cause to bless the hour I went to West-'minster Abbey; or rather, that which 'carried me to the Park yesterday; with-'out which, he might never have known 'who I was, or where to find me, and 'should have lost all the advantage 'my good stars seem to have decreed for 'me.'

Here she ceased to speak, other sort of emotions rising in her mind; to which she gave a loose in this exclamation—'It was an unlucky thing I went so far 'with Rossano. The poor man loves 'me to distraction: he will certainly 'break his heart when he finds I have 'forsaken him; and, it may be, re-'proach me as the occasion of his 'death.'

On this her countenance seemed a little disconcerted, but it soon wore off; and, after a short pause, she went on thus—'I am glad, however, that no 'contract has passed between us. The 'encouragement I gave his passion, and 'the verbal promises I made him, need 'be no impediment to my accepting a 'better offer. It will be prudence in 'me, however, not to throw him off, 'nor give him any room to suspect I 'have less affection for him than I had, 'till I am well assured that Leontine is 'in earnest.'

This was enough to shew me the principle and disposition of Syrenia; both which, indeed, were so little pleasing to me, that I had not patience to stay with her any longer, but quitted her apartment with a contempt which, could she have been sensible of, would no doubt have given her some mortification.

I made one of the company that night at Delia's, however; but as it could not be expected that in a meeting which was to pass for casual there should be any conversation except on general topicks, I reaped no other benefit by being present, than to be convinced that Leontine, by the glances he took every opportunity of casting at Syrenia, was indeed very much enamoured, and that she spared no pains to make him more so. The next day he went with the brother of Delia to visit her, and the succeeding one took the liberty of going thither alone, and made a declaration of his passion; which she, having well prepared herself with answers, received in such a manner, as neither to reject, nor with too much readiness encourage.

The ice once broke, he prosecuted his addresses with so much vigour and assiduity, that she thought it would be no breach of modesty to give him room to hope he was not altogether indifferent to her: by degrees, therefore, she became more kind on every visit he made; but did it with caution and reserve, neither by her looks or words forfeiting that

that character of discretion she so much valued herself upon; dropping only some hints, as if forced from her from a fund of tenderness within, which she would fain endeavour to conceal, but had not the power of doing it. Thus artful in appearing artless, Leontine, though a man of very good sense and penetration, never once suspected she was any other than such as she affected to be, plain, simple, generous, and incapable of disguising her sentiments.

It is certain, indeed, that her natural cunning was greatly assisted how to proceed on this occasion by the intelligence she daily received from Delia, to whose brother Leontine made no scruple of disburdening all that passed in his heart in relation to his passion for Syrenia. From this faithful friend she learned, that though it was not to be doubted but that Leontine was as much in love with her as man could be, yet the great respect and reverence he had for his father would not permit him to think of venturing on a thing of so much consequence as marriage, without having first obtained his consent and approbation of the woman he made choice of for a wife; and that, to this end, he had already sent two letters to his father, who lived entirely in the country; but the answers he received not being quite so satisfactory as he wished, he had wrote a third, dictated in the most passionate and pressing terms.

She could not avoid being under some very uneasy apprehensions on the score of this old gentleman, and also feared that the passion Leontine was inspired with might not of itself be strong enough to get the better of that obedience owing from him to a father's will; she therefore wished to interest his good-nature and generosity in her favour, and judged that the surest way to secure his affection was to make him a confidant of her's. But the means of accomplishing this was a difficulty she knew not presently how to get over. To confess by word of mouth she loved him, seemed too great a breach of modesty, especially as his courtship to her had not yet been of any long continuance; and to get him informed of it by Delia she thought would be the same thing, as he would doubtless imagine it was not done without her privity and consent; besides, she knew not whether that lady would approve of such a step. Being one day desired by him to favour him with a tune on her spinnet, she entertained him with an air out of the opera of Arsinoe, the first in the Italian taste ever exhibited on the English stage, and, in my opinion, has been exceeded by none that have come after it. The words she sung to her instrument were these—

'Wanton zephyrs, softly blowing,
'Watching, catching, whispering, going,
'Bear in sighs my soul away:
'Tell Ormondo what I feel,
'Tell him how his chains I wear,
'Tell him all my grief and care;
'Gently stealing,
'And revealing,
'More of love than I can say.'

But though Leontine extolled both the musick and the voice which gave it utterance, yet he shewe no indication of imagining she had any design of flattering his passion in the choice she made of this song. This making her perceive she must be more explicit, her fertile invention soon presented her with a stratagem, which pleasing her fancy at the same time that it promised the success she aimed at, she put into immediate execution. It was this—Having a natural talent for poetry, she sat down at her escritoire, took pen, ink, and paper, and, without being at the pains of much study, wrote the following lines—

'THE BREATHINGS OF A LOVE-
'SICK HEART.

'Wit, manly beauty, every grace combine,
'To deck the youth I love with charms
'divine.
'But, ah! my too uncautious heart take
'heed,
'Nor with gay hopes the growing passion
'feed.
'Wealth's the chief idol that mankind
'adore,
'The sovereign power they all fall down
'before;
'My niggard fortune does that charm deny,
'And love alone will not it's wants supply:
'Let me then guard each avenue to my
'breast,
'And bar all entrance to this dangerous
'guest;
'Lest, by indulging the presumptuous flame,
'I fall the victim of despair and shame:
'But, oh! 'tis vain!—the god of love con-
'spires

'To

'To aid my Leontine with all his fires;
'Speaks in his voice, and ſparkles in his
'eyes;
'And what he ſweetly forces, juſtifies.
'Tis ſure determin'd in the book of fate;
'I muſt adore, ev'n though he proves un-
'grate.'

This paper, which ſhe wanted him to believe was a ſincere confeſſion of the whole ſecret of her ſoul, ſhe contrived ſhould fall into his hands in ſuch a manner as ſhould have too much the appearance of chance to be liable to any ſuſpicion of deſign. At his next viſit, her maid being well inſtructed by her how to act, ran haſtily into the room, and told her that the man whom ſhe had ordered to come for his money was below. Syrenia affected not to underſtand what ſhe meant, and cried—

Syrenia. What man? What money?

Maid. Mr. Shapely, Madam, your ſtaymaker.

Syrenia. Oh, now I remember I did bid him come for his money. He takes a ſtrange unſeaſonable time. People ſhould always come in a morning on theſe affairs. However, I'll ſee if I can find his bill; and do you carry a pen and ink into the parlour, that he may write me a receipt on the back of it.

On this the maid withdrew, and Syrenia opened a little deſk that ſtood in the dining-room, and beginning to tumble over ſome writings ſhe had there, as in ſearch of the pretended bill, dexterouſly ſlipped from among the reſt the paper which contained the above recited verſes, and let it fall to the ground without ſeeming to obſerve that any thing was dropped; then ſaying ſhe had found what ſhe had looked for, ſhut up the deſk in a great hurry, begged Leontine would excuſe her abſence for a few moments, and went down ſtairs. She was no ſooner gone, than Leontine, happening to caſt his eyes that way, ſaw the paper, and took it up, as I ſuppoſe with no other intention than to deliver it to Syrenia when ſhe ſhould return; but it being purpoſely folded in ſuch a manner that part of the writing appeared on the outſide, he muſt have been ſtrangely incurious indeed, if ſeeing it a poem, and wrote in his miſtreſs's hand, he had forbore examining it. Never was any tranſport more viſible than in the countenance of Leontine while reading theſe deluſive ſtanzas: his look put me in mind of the poet's words—

'Kindneſs has reſiſtleſs charms,
'All things elſe but faintly warms;
'It gilds the lover's ſervile chain,
'And makes the ſlave grow pleas'd and
'vain.'

Though, by the particulars I have been repeating, the reader will eaſily ſuppoſe I was both an eye and an ear witneſs of them, yet it is utterly impoſſible for me to deſcribe either the looks or attitude of the one or the other, in the joyous ſurprize of finding himſelf, as he imagined, thus extremely dear to the only woman to whom he wiſhed to be ſo. She took care to ſtay ſo long below, as to give him time to read over, more than once, what ſhe intended for his peruſal. It was ſtill in his hands when ſhe returned; but ſhe ſeemed to take no notice of it, and was beginning to apologize for her abſence, by laying the blame on the impertinence of her ſtaymaker; but Leontine, with a geſture full of rapture, interrupted her, ſaying—

Leontine. O, Madam, you muſt allow me to become an advocate for this honeſt tradeſman, ſince by his fortunate detaining you I am made the happieſt of mankind.

To this Syrenia, affecting not to comprehend the meaning of what he ſaid, replied with a ſmile—

Syrenia. What riddle is this you are about to poſe me with? I am the dulleſt creature in the world at giving a ſolution to theſe things.

Leontine. This paper, Madam, wafted to me by the god of love's own hand, has given me the wiſhed-for opportunity of proving myſelf leſs unworthy of the bleſſing I aſpire to, than your doubts ſuggeſt. No, my charming Syrenia, not all the treaſures in the world could add one ray of luſtre to the graces of your mind and perſon; 'tis thoſe alone I covet to enjoy, and in poſſeſſing them ſhall be more rich than in poſſeſſing both the Indies.

While he was thus ſpeaking, Syrenia caſt her eyes upon the paper, and bluſhed exceſſively; partly, perhaps, through ſhame, but more through the pleaſure which diffuſed itſelf through all her veins on perceiving, by the behaviour of Leontine,

ontine, how well the ſucceſs of her plot had anſwered to the intention of it. The well-diſſembled confuſion ſhe was in was an excuſe for her not ſpeaking; and Leontine went on to aſſure her, in the moſt tender terms, that no conſideration whatever ſhould have the power to oblige him to withdraw that firm affection he now vowed to her; and that he hoped a very little time would put a final period to all her apprehenſions on that ſcore. What farther converſation paſſed between them at this time I ſhall forbear to repeat, as it may be eaſily gueſſed at; and proceed to the conduct of Syrenia in regard to her other lover, who the reader may think I have too long neglected.

The buſineſs which called Roſſano into the country detained him there much longer than he had expected; and an unlucky fall from his horſe, the very day before he intended to ſet out for London, occaſioned a ſecond delay to his journey. This abſence of his gave Syrenia a full opportunity of entertaining her new lover, though ſhe received every poſt a letter from the former, all which ſhe did not fail to anſwer with that tenderneſs which might be expected from a woman who had promiſed to be his wife; ſtill keeping cloſe to her firſt maxim, not to give any umbrage to the one, till ſhe was perfectly ſecure of the other. All impediments, however, being at laſt removed, that gentleman arrived in town on the ſame day that Syrenia and Leontine were engaged in the manner above recited. His impatience to ſee his beloved miſtreſs carried him immediately to her lodgings: he came while his rival was with her; but her maid, well knowing how improper it was that they ſhould meet, told him her lady was abroad; on which he went away, ſaying he would return in the evening, as he knew ſhe was not accuſtomed to ſtay late from home.

He was doubtleſs much diſappointed, but not at all ſuſpicious of the cauſe; till having croſſed the ſtreet, he happened to caſt his eyes back upon the houſe, either by chance, or poſſibly through fondneſs of the place which contained the idol of his wiſhes. Syrenia was ſitting in the window, and Leontine very near to her. Roſſano had a full view of both; but Syrenia was too earneſt in diſcourſe to obſerve him, though he ſtood motionleſs on the ſpot where he was for ſome minutes. It ſeemed not ſtrange to him that a gentleman ſhould be with her, though he could find no way to account why he ſhould be denied acceſs to her but one, which ſtung him to the ſoul. He was more than once tempted by his jealouſy, as I afterwards diſcovered, to return, and demand of the maid a reaſon for his having been refuſed admittance; but ſecond thoughts prevailed, and he went home, to deliberate how it would beſt become him to behave in ſuch a circumſtance.

Leontine ſtaid ſupper; and Syrenia ſtepping out of the room to give ſome neceſſary orders to her maid, was informed by her that Roſſano had been there, and the meſſage he had left. This greatly diſconcerted her; but, after a little pauſe, ſhe recovered herſelf enough to give theſe directions—'This is very unlucky! 'Leontine will probably ſtay late: you 'you muſt therefore tell Roſſano that I 'am not yet come home, and that you 'believe I am gone to the play.' The maid punctually obeying theſe directions, Roſſano only replied that, ſince it had happened ſo, he would do himſelf the honour to breakfaſt with her lady the next morning; and then departed, ſeemingly well ſatisfied. But though he forbore giving any indications of his jealouſy to this girl, he doubted not but that the ſecond repulſe was owing to the ſame motive the firſt had been. Reſolving, however, to be more fully convinced, he poſted his ſervant, whom he had brought with him for that purpoſe, under a lamp a few doors from the houſe where Syrenia lodged, charging him to obſerve carefully who came in or out; and if he ſaw a gentleman in black velvet and a bag wig, to follow him whereever he went, find out his name if poſſible, and bring him an exact account.

Leontine was ſo much charmed with the diſcovery he had made of Syrenia's affection, that he quitted her apartment not till the night was far advanced. Roſſano's ſervant, however, kept cloſe to his ſtand, till a chair being called, he ſaw the gentleman his maſter had deſcribed go into it. He followed; and as ſoon as Leontine had entered the houſe where he lodged, and the door was ſhut, aſked the chairmen if they knew the gentleman they had carried; but they anſwering in the negative, and he ſeeing no houſe open where he might enquire, could learn nothing farther that night; but early the next morning he went

again,

again, and had the addreſs to find out all the particulars that could be expected from him.

Roſſano was now aſſured not only that he had a rival, but alſo a rival highly favoured by his miſtreſs. The diſtraction he was in may eaſily be conceived; but he diſſembled it on his firſt approach to Syrenia, whom he did not fail to viſit the next morning, as he had told her maid. Syrenia, before ſhe was informed of it, knowing very well, that miſſing ſeeing her that night, he would not let another day paſs over without coming, had the artifice to tell Leontine ſhe was obliged to go ſome few miles out of town to ſee a relation who ſhe heard was dangerouſly ill.

I am not a perſon who live without having ſome buſineſs in the world, yet there are few things of conſequence enough to me to have detained me from being a witneſs of what paſſed in this interview between Roſſano and Syrenia, and ſhall preſent my readers with it as recorded in my faithful Tablets. Syrenia no ſooner heard he was there, than ſhe ran to the top of the ſtair-caſe to receive him, and with the greateſt ſhew of tenderneſs ſaluted him in theſe terms—

Syrenia. My dear Roſſano, how grieved have I been for loſing the ſight of you laſt night, after having been ſo long an age of time deprived of it!

Roſſano. The misfortune, Madam, was wholly mine; for while I moaned your abſence, you doubtleſs found ſomething to amuſe and entertain you. I heard you were at the play.

Syrenia. I was ſo: but what could I find there to compenſate for the ſatisfaction I miſſed by being ſo unluckily from home!

Roſſano, Were you at Covent Garden?

Syrenia. No, at Drury Lane. But why do you aſk?

Roſſano. Only for a fooliſh fancy.

Syrenia. Nay, I may anſwer myſelf that queſtion. I will lay my life you went in ſearch of me. But I choſe to go in a diſhabille, and ſat on the back bench in Burton's box; ſo it was impoſſible for you to ſee me

Roſſano. Not ſo impoſſible as you imagine, Madam. But I had no need to go to either of the theatres; the object I ſo much languiſhed to behold preſented itſelf to me without my taking any pains.

Theſe words occaſioned a viſible change in her countenance; ſhe bluſhed exceſſively, caſt her eyes upon the ground, and had not power to lift them up while ſhe ſaid only—

Syrenia. What is it you mean?

Roſſano. There needs no explanation: the diſorder you in vain endeavour to conceal, ſhews but too much how well you are acquainted with my meaning. Ah, Syrenia, Syrenia! how did I once flatter myſelf with an aſſurance that your heart was mine, inviolably mine; but now I find my abſence has been fatal to me!

Syrenia. Forbear to talk thus. Theſe ſuſpicions are unjuſt to me, and cruel to yourſelf.

Roſſano. Why, then, was I laſt night turned from your door? Why twice repulſed, while my more happy rival was allowed the privilege of entertaining you till midnight?

Syrenia. Who tells you this?

Roſſano. My own eyes, Madam, were my firſt intelligencers. I ſaw you at that window; ſaw alſo your new favourite; and eaſily judged, by both your attitudes, what was the ſubject of your converſation. As to the reſt, I was informed of it by means to which I afterwards had recourſe.

The falſe Syrenia was now abſolutely confounded. There was no giving the lye to ocular demonſtration as to the firſt part of Roſſano's charge againſt her; but ſhe endeavoured to avoid the latter, by ſaying—

Syrenia. Well, Sir, I own I was at home, and had ordered myſelf to be denied; but expected not your coming, or knew you had been here till after you were gone. As for the gentleman you ſaw with me, 'tis your own jealous fancy alone that makes you regard him in the light of a lover.

Roſſano. I grant you did not expect me; but as your ſervant is no ſtranger to the footing we are upon, ſhe would certainly have looked on me as an exception to the general order you had given, if ſhe had not known I was no proper perſon to join in the company you had above: beſides, you cannot plead ignorance of my ſecond viſit, yet I was again turned back.

Syrenia. You wrong me: I proteſt I never heard of your being here till I was going to bed. Think no more, therefore, of ſuch idle ſtuff: this is not

discourse for two people who love, and have so long been absent from each other.

Rossano. Ah, Syrenia! I wish the treatment I have received would allow me to entertain you with any other. There was a time when I could be as gay, perhaps, as he who now supplants me in your esteem.

Syrenia. Still harping on the same string? Remember what the poet says—

'No signs of love in jealous men remains,
'But that which sick men have of life, their
'pains.'

She had just done repeating these lines, when the tea-equipage was brought in for breakfast; and Rossano, who I could perceive by his countenance was little pleased with the trifling answers she had made to his reproaches, rose up to take his leave; on which she suddenly catched hold of his hand, and, with a well-counterfeited tenderness in her voice and eyes, said to him—

Syrenia. You will not go and leave me in this humour?

Rossano. Indeed I must. I have this moment thought of a business that requires immediate dispatch.

Syrenia. Shall I then see you in the afternoon?

Rossano. I cannot promise.

He was half way down stairs while speaking these last words; and though she followed him two or three steps, and called to him to stay, he turned not, nor even looked back upon her, but went hastily out of the house. I was resolved to see what was his intent, and accompanied him to the house of that kinswoman where he had first seen Syrenia. He was beginning to tell her what cause of complaint he had against that lady, but she stopped his mouth, by saying that she was already acquainted with every thing he had to relate; and then proceeded to inform him, that having a friend who lived opposite to Syrenia, she had learned that she entertained a new lover, who visited her almost every day, and that the neighbourhood believed it would very shortly be a match. Rossano went from this relation to his own lodgings; where, having vented some part of his rage in exclamations on the levity and ingratitude of womankind, he sat down and wrote the following lines to Leontine—

'SIR,

'YOU have endeavoured to supplant 'me in the affection of the wo-'man I loved, and am engaged to 'marry; I need not tell you I mean 'Syrenia. I expect, therefore, you 'will either resign all pretensions to her 'under your own hand, or give such sa-'tisfaction as one gentleman has a right 'to demand from another in these cases. 'I shall attend you behind Montague 'House at eight to-morrow morning; 'till when, yours,

'ROSSANO.'

This he sent immediately to Leontine; who happening to be at home, returned an answer by the bearer in these terms—

'SIR,

'I Own myself a lover of Syrenia, but 'know nothing of your courtship 'to her, nor will believe she is under 'any engagement of the nature you 'mention, either to you or any other 'man; and shall be so far from resign-'ing my pretensions, that I will defend 'them to the last moment of my life: 'you may therefore rely on my meeting 'you at the time and place appointed. 'Yours,

'LEONTINE.'

Rossano had scarce finished reading this billet, when a porter brought him a letter from Syrenia, the contents whereof were these—

'MY VERY DEAR ROSSANO,

'YOUR behaviour this morning has 'thrown me into disquiets which 'might excite compassion in a heart less 'devoted to me than I flattered myself 'yours was. I thought the love be-'tween us was established on a more so-'lid basis, than to be shook by every puff 'of jealous caprice; I doubt not but to 'convince you that yours is no other. 'If this is so lucky as to find you at 'home, or you receive it time enough, I 'beg to see you this evening; for I can-'not bear you should pass another night 'in such cruel suspicions of your faith-'fully affectionate

'SYRENIA.'

I perceived he was in some dilemma on reading this billet; he paused awhile, then said—'My compliments to the la-'dy, and——' Then paused again; at last

laſt cried—'Tell her I am engaged 'this day, but will wait on her to-'morrow.'

Various reflections ſeemed now rolling in the mind of this much-abuſed lover; but I left him in them, and contented myſelf with going the next morning to the field of battle, in order to ſee how the combatants would behave. They were both ſo punctual to the time, that it is hard to ſay which of them was firſt within the liſts. Roſſano, however, having ſome idea of Leontine, as he had ſeen him through Syrenia's window, advanced towards him, and ſaid—

Roſſano. I gueſs, Sir, you are the gentleman I invited hither.

Leontine. You are not deceived, Sir, if your name be Roſſano.

Roſſano. The ſame, Sir.

Leontine. Mine, then, is Leontine; and you find me ready to maintain my pretenſions to the fair Syrenia.

Roſſano. And I to aſſert that right which a long ſeries of encouraged court-ſhip and mutual vows has given me.

Leontine. This, then, is the way we muſt diſpute the prize.

Both their ſwords were already drawn; and Roſſano, either through ſuperior ſkill or better fortune, gave his antagoniſt a ſlight wound in the ſide on the firſt paſs, and on the ſecond a much deeper on the right-arm; which occaſioning a great effuſion of blood, he was obliged to drop his ſword; on which the other, imagining the miſchief to be greater than it really proved, ſtepped haſtily towards him, with theſe words—'Sir, though I 'might expect the juſtice of my cauſe 'would give me ſome advantage over 'you, I ſhould be extremely ſorry to 'find it attended with any bad effects; I 'beg, therefore, as there are ſcarce any 'chairs abroad ſo early, you will give 'me leave to ſupport you to my lodg-'ings, which are very near, and where 'you may have immediate aſſiſtance.'

Leontine accepted the offer. A ſurgeon was immediately called, and his cloaths ſtripped off in order to have his wounds examined: that on his ſide was not at all deep; and that on his arm happening not to be near any tendon, required little more than a tight bandage for it's cure. He was adviſed, however, to drink ſome mulled wine, and then endeavour to compoſe himſelf to ſleep for a few hours. Roſſano, with a great deal of humanity and politeneſs, took care to ſee this injunction performed; and, on Leontine's requeſting it, ſent to his lodging for freſh cloaths and linen for him to put on when he ſhould awake.

As Roſſano was retiring, to leave his gueſt to that repoſe which was thought needful for him, he ſaw a paper lying on the floor, which he took up, not knowing but it was ſomething belonging to himſelf; but how great was his amazement when he found what it contained, this being the very verſes Syrenia had wrote on Leontine, and had fortuitouſly been ſhook out of that gentleman's pocket as his cloaths were haſtily thrown to the other ſide of the room. Till now, the love he had bore Syrenia kept him from entertaining any worſe opinion of her conduct, than that it was the vanity incident to her ſex, which alone had made her encourage the addreſſes of Leontine; but this plain proof of her inconſtancy gave a ſudden turn to his ſentiments, and changed at once all the tenderneſs he ever had for her into contempt and hatred. Leontine alſo had ſome uneaſy thoughts on the ſcore of Syrenia; Roſſano ſeemed to him to be a man of too much honour to aſſert a falſhood; and began to fear that himſelf had been deceived in his opinion of that lady's ſincerity. Being leſs inclined to ſleep than to be ſatisfied in this point, he rung a bell which hung by the bedſide; on which Roſſano, who was no farther than the next room, went in, and aſked how he did; to which he replied—

Leontine. So well, that I think I need lie here no longer than till my man brings me ſome clean apparel, that I may riſe with decency. In the mean time, Sir, ſhould take it as a favour you would let me know how far I have been guilty of injuſtice to you in regard of Syrenia. In your billet to me, you mention an engagement: if it be ſo, I was perfectly ignorant of it, and, at that time, imagined I had ſtrong reaſons for diſbelieving it; otherwiſe, I do aſſure you, Sir, not all my paſſion for that lady ſhould have made me attempt to diſunite your loves.

Roſſano. Though it may ſeem ungenerous to boaſt a lady's favours, as I have no other way to juſtify my raſh proceedings towards you, be pleaſed to read that letter.

In ſpeaking this, he preſented to Leontine the letter he had received from Syrenia

renia the day before; which that gentleman had no ſooner looked over, than he cried out, with the greateſt ſurprize—

Leontine. Good Heaven! Why this was dated but yeſterday!

Roſſano. Yes, Sir; and wrote on account of my teſtifying ſome jealouſy on your being with her the evening before. But I have now done with that idle paſſion, and can now reſign my claim with as much calmneſs as I would lately have maintained it with eagerneſs.

Leontine. Is it poſſible you can be in earneſt!

Roſſano. Were Syrenia more beautiful than ſhe is, the enjoyment of her perſon, without her heart, could give me no happineſs; and had this paper, which accidentally fell from your pocket in the hurry this morning, happened ſooner into my hands, I ſhould not have proceeded as I have done.

In ſpeaking this, he gave Leontine the paper he had taken up: the other immediately ſaw what it was; and, receiving it with a ſmile, made this reply—'I thank you, Sir; but I aſſure 'you I am not at all vain of theſe 'verſes, as they ſerve only to prove that 'the lady was willing to be double 'armed; and in caſe one lover ſhould 'fail, to be provided with another.'

After this they began to enter into a very free diſcuſſion on the conduct of Syrenia towards them both; and there now appeared ſo much deceit, mean artifice, ingratitude, and perfidy, as well to the one as the other, that it is hard to ſay which of them entertained the moſt deſpicable notions of her: in fine, they agreed to reſent the impoſitions ſhe had practiſed on them in ſuch a manner as ſome of my fair readers, how greatly ſoever they may condemn Syrenia, will not, perhaps, eaſily abſolve them for.

The ſervant of Leontine being arrived with the things his maſter had ordered to be brought, that gentleman roſe, and got himſelf dreſſed; and Roſſano in the mean time employed himſelf in gathering up all the letters he had received from Syrenia, and made them up in a large packet, and wrote on the cover—

'Amorous billets from a lady of a very 'extraordinary character.'

They went in two chairs to the houſe where Syrenia lodged; and the door being opened, ruſhed up ſtairs without any ceremony, and even into the dining-room where ſhe was ſitting. Leontine was the firſt that entered: ſhe roſe to receive him; but ſeeing his arm in a ſcarf, cried out—

Syrenia. Oh, Sir! what accident has befallen you?

Leontine. No unlucky one, Madam. I have indeed received two ſlight wounds on your account; but I bleſs the hand that gave them, ſince they have been the means of curing one of a more dangerous nature in my heart.

She had no time to aſk what he meant by theſe words; Roſſano was now in the room, and rejoined to what the other had ſaid in this manner—

Roſſano. My heart is alſo in a pretty good condition too; for though I have loſt a miſtreſs, I have gained a friend, from whom I have reaſon to hope more ſincerity. You ſee, Madam, two perſons together, whom doubtleſs you wiſhed to keep ſeparate, while we had ſeparate intereſts: but we have now agreed; and as we lately joined to perſecute you with our addreſſes, now join in the reſolution of troubling you no more.

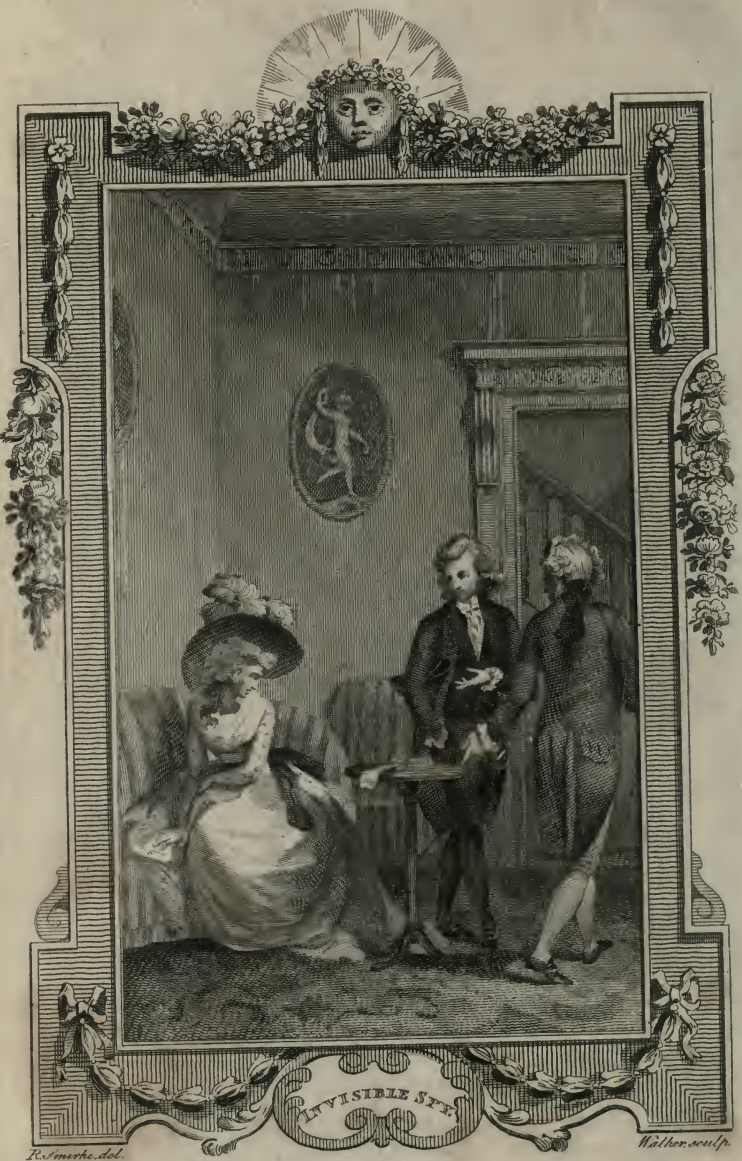
Leontine. I have nothing to add, Madam, to what my friend has delivered, but to reſtore this paper; which can be of no uſe to me, and may be of ſome to you; as, change but the name, the picture may ſuit ſome happier man.

Roſſano. And I return thoſe letters you have from time to time favoured me with.

He then laid down the packet, at the ſame time Leontine did the verſes, upon a table. Syrenia was all this while immoveable as a ſtatue: ſhe had found, from their firſt entrance, that they had compared notes; that ſhe was expoſed, her arts laid open, and her hopes irrecoverably loſt with both. Fain would ſhe have ſpoke, but had not power; and all ſhe could utter at laſt was—

Syrenia. Mighty well!—So, then, I am to be inſulted?

Roſſano. No, Madam, your birth and beauty are your protection; and had your mind been equal to either, neither of us, I believe, would have broke his chain, or even wiſhed to regain that liberty



R. Smirke. del.

Walker. sculp.

Plate IV.

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liberty we now have ſo much cauſe to triumph in.

Leontine. Come, Sir, you ſee the lady is diſconcerted: let us leave her to meditate on this adventure; it may be of ſervice in ſome future one.

Roſſano. With all my heart.—A good huſband to you, Madam.

Leontine. I join in the ſame wiſh.—Your ſervant, Madam.

They departed with theſe words, and I ſtaid not long after them; the ſight of Syrenia's deſpair, how juſtly ſoever ſhe had brought it on herſelf, giving more pain than ſatisfaction.

END OF THE SEVENTH BOOK.

THE

INVISIBLE SPY.

BOOK VIII.

CHAP. I.

CONTAINS A VERY BRIEF DETAIL OF SUCH OCCURRENCES AS PRESENTED THEMSELVES TO THE AUTHOR'S OBSERVATION IN AN EVENING'S INVISIBLE RAMBLE THROUGH SEVERAL PARTS OF THIS METROPOLIS.

IT has often been a matter of very great concern to me, and I believe muſt be the ſame to every thinking mind, to ſee how ſome people are continually hurried and buſied about mere trifles, of no manner of conſequence to themſelves, or ſcarce to any body elſe; while all the duties of religion, all the regard for the welfare of their moſt particular friends, all love of country, and even the deareſt intereſts of their own families, are totally neglected. What judgment can we form of a perſon of this caſt, but that he has a vacuum in his head ready to be filled up with the firſt toy that preſents itſelf; and not being endowed with a ſtrength of reaſon ſufficient to direct his choice, ſuffers himſelf to be engroſſed by ſuch things as he finds make moſt noiſe in the world, not ſuch as have moſt relation to his own affairs, either as to fortune or reputation?

Can there be a ſight more farcical than for a man who, without any petition to prefer, or ſuit to ſolicit; in fine, without any call or buſineſs whatſoever, is continually cringing at the levee of a miniſter of ſtate; and, when the compliments are paid, and the circle is diſmiſſed, runs through the whole round of his acquaintance, reporting where he has been and what he has ſeen, ſagaciouſly remarking on every nod, wink, or ſmile, of the great man, and finding myſtery even in the tye of his wig, or the looſe or ſtrait buttoning his coat?

Another, whoſe affairs at home perhaps are involved in the utmoſt perplexities, ſhall paſs the beſt part of his time among the jobbers in 'Change Alley, go from coffee-houſe to coffee-houſe, enquire of every broker he meets with the price of ſtocks, in which he has no ſhare, or money to purchaſe any; and be more ſolicitous in finding out the uſes to which the Sinking-fund is appropriated, than for the means of extricating himſelf out of his preſent difficulties.

A third values himſelf much upon being a great connoiſſeur in politicks, regiſters all the publick papers from year to year, pretends to reconcile all the contradictions

traditions they contain, and to discover some latent meaning in every paragraph; and takes more pains to unriddle their imaginary ænigmas, than a poor servitor at the university does to translate Perseus for a rich student who pays, and fathers the labour of his brain.

Others have a taste for building, are extremely curious in ornamenting the structures they cause to be erected with carvings, paintings, and such like superficial beauties; but never once examine how the foundation is laid, or whether the pompous outworks may not be liable to sink very soon into a heap of rubbish. Some employ their whole cares on the breeding and well-managing their horses, hounds, and game-cocks, leaving the education of their sons entirely unregarded.

Impossible is it to enumerate the various trifles with which too many, even among the highest class of life, suffer themselves not only to be amused, but wholly taken up; but I think, without any danger of being accused of too much severity, one may justly say, with Shakespeare, of such men, that—

'The earth has bubbles, as the water
'hath,
'And these are some of them.'

In a word, 'Much Ado about Nothing,' is a play so universally acted in this town, that one can go to very few places without being witness of some scenes of it. As insignificant, however, as these people may seem by the description I have given of them, and as in effect they really are, they are yet of more consequence to the publick than is generally believed, or than they themselves, with all the stock of vanity they are usually possessed of, are capable of imagining. This, though it may be thought a paradox, will be easy for me to make appear; as thus—These unjudging creatures, for I have already proved them to be such, are frequently made the tools by which evil and designing men fashion out their ends. When those in power have any thing on foot from which they find it necessary to divert the attention of the nation, it is but throwing out some whisper, though of ever so absurd and ridiculous a nature, among the people I am speaking of, and they will immediately ring it in the ears of the populace till it becomes the cry, and every argument that truth and reason can alledge is deafened with the noise.

An experience of many years, joined with a diligent observation of the world, has convinced me, beyond all doubt, that these inconsiderates, without being sensible of the mischief they do, have been, and daily are, the instruments of propagating the most infamous scandals, gross falsities, and base aspersions, on the great and good; as also the most ridiculous and idle stories, invented and calculated by men of more thinking heads, to amuse and divert the attention of the publick from what most demands it's regard. A glaring instance of this latter kind now takes up the town; all mouths are full of it, all ears open to it: but it appears to me that there are few eyes clear enough to discern the secret ground-work of this mountain of absurdities, and on what motive it was erected. I think it not my province, however, nor shall presume to inform the judgment of any one in this point; but shall only relate a passage I happened to be witness of, which every one is at liberty to descant upon as he shall think proper.

Being one day on the other side of the Royal Exchange, where some business I had there being dispatched sooner than I expected, it came into my head to call in at a certain celebrated coffee-house, which I had been told was frequented by a great number of the most eminent and wealthy citizens; but as I had no acquaintance with them, and some other more substantial reasons for not appearing in *propria persona*, I chose to go in my Invisible capacity. Pursuant to this resolution, I stepped into the first obscure alley I could find, and there girded on my precious Belt; which, as well as my Tablets, I seldom went out without taking with me, and then hastened to the place I mentioned.

I found the room very full of company, most of whom were of that sect of dissenters from the established church which are under the denomination of Presbyterians. I would not here be understood to mean any thing in ridicule of those gentlemen; for I love and revere every man of real virtue and good sense, be he of what persuasion soever. How far the persons I have just now occasion to speak of answer to either of these characters I will not pretend to say; let their own words testify. I shall, according

to

to the phraſe of the inſpired writer, ſet a guard upon my mouth, that I offend not with my lips. But to proceed—

Three or four, who I afterwards perceived were leading men among them, were engaged in a very warm diſpute with a gentleman, who endeavoured, with a great deal of ſpirit, to expoſe the groſs abſurdities and falſhood of a cauſe they took upon them to maintain, and with a kind of magiſterial air attempted to enforce the belief of in others. The odds appeared to me at firſt, I confeſs, a little ungenerous; but I was the more ſtrengthened in this opinion, when I heard the manner in which they delivered their arguments, and that were urged in favour of one of the moſt prepoſterous and ridiculous complaints that ever engaged the attention of any men of common ſenſe. After ſaying this, I think it is needleſs to add, it was the affair of Squires and Canning. As I am utterly unacquainted with the names either of thoſe who defended the cauſe of the latter, or of him who treated it with contempt, I ſhall diſtinguiſh the one by that of Aſſertors, and the other by that of Opponent. The converſation which paſſed on both ſides, after I had got a convenient place to poſt myſelf, and had ſpread my Tablets, I ſhall give the publick a faithful tranſcript of, as taken from thoſe unerring teſtimonies, and was as the reader will find underwritten.

Firſt Aſſertor. I am ſurprized, Sir, you ſhould rack your brain for arguments againſt the cauſe of helpleſs innocence and virtue in diſtreſs.

Second Aſſertor. 'Tis barbarous! 'tis cruel! Where ſhall we find an object of compaſſion, if Betty Canning is not one? We know her, Sir.

Third Aſſertor. Aye, ſhe is of our congregation; has always been a diligent frequenter of the meeting-houſe, and fervent in her devotions.

Opponent. So, becauſe ſhe is of your congregation, it naturally follows ſhe muſt be chaſte; the lambs of your flock never go aſtray. But I forbear to make any reflection on this ſcore, and ſhall only ſay, I never ſhall give credit to a ſtory ſo full of inconſiſtencies and improbabilities as this which has been forged by her and her accomplices.

Firſt Aſſertor. Sir, there is no reaſoning againſt fact. She has ſworn to the truth of it before a magiſtrate, and that magiſtrate has teſtified his belief of it.

Opponent. Yes, the ſtory ſhe told was romantick; it ſuited his taſte; he thought it might be a proper ſubject to work up into a farce or puppet-ſhew; ſo was willing to promote the credibility of it.

Firſt Aſſertor. Mere ſpite and ſcandal.

Opponent. Not at all: and I doubt not but the impoſition will be fully laid open by another magiſtrate, ſuperior in every degree to him who takes her part.

Firſt Aſſertor. Sir, it is profane and impious in him, or you, or any man, to eſpouſe the cauſe of a wicked old hag, a vagabond, a gipſey, ſuch as Mary Squires; and a known inſtrument of libidinous pleaſures, ſuch as Mother Wells.

Opponent. Gentlemen, I have nothing to alledge in defence of theſe creatures, but that, however guilty they may have been, or continue to be, in other reſpects, they are entirely innocent in this they are accuſed of.

Firſt Aſſertor. No, no; 'tis impoſſible.

Opponent. Saying a thing does not prove it to be ſo. But give me leave only to offer a few queries, in relation to ſome of the many inconſiſtencies in the tale told by that idle wench Betty Canning.

Second Aſſertor. Do ſo; we ſhall know how to anſwer them.

Opponent. Firſt, then, ſuppoſing her to have been robbed, in the manner ſhe pretends, by two ruffians, what could induce fellows who live upon the ſpoil, after having taken from her all they found worth taking, to quit the purſuit of other booty, and loſe their time in dragging her into the country, only to throw her into the houſe, and then leave her there; for ſhe does not accuſe them of making any attempt upon her chaſtity?

Firſt Aſſertor. As to that, it is highly probable they might be feed by Mother Wells to bring the firſt young woman they could meet with to her houſe, in order to be made a ſacrifice to her mercenary views, and the luſt of ſome vile fellow.

Opponent. Then they would certainly have choſen an object of a more tempting aſpect, or would have deſerved little for their pains: but let that paſs. If it were as you imagine, would any woman, who it is ſaid has long been in practice in the ſeducing trade, have behaved

haved towards the prey brought into her clutches in the fashion she did to Betty Canning? Would she not rather have soothed the frighted maid, revived her drooping spirits with good eating and drinking, promised her fine cloaths, and then introduced some man to her, who might have allured her to the sin she aimed to make her guilty of? Surely the way to tempt her to be a prostitute was not to lock her up alone in a wild, desolate room, without a bed to lie upon, or any other refreshment than a little bread and water; such usage, one must think, was intended to mortify, not excite a carnal inclination.

First Assertor. Sir, I am grieved, greatly grieved in spirit, to find you so ignorant of the force of virtue. I tell you, Sir, that the courage and resolution of this virgin struck such an awe into the minds of those profligate wretches she was placed among, that they had not the power of putting their wicked designs in execution: Heaven, indeed, for a trial of her patience, permitted them to distress her helpless innocence, but not to destroy it.

Opponent. Very extraordinary, truly! But pray, Sir, why did this suffering saint remain so long under the roof of such abandoned creatures, since all accounts agree, that in three days, nay, in three hours, after her confinement, she had the same opportunity of making her escape as at the time she pretends to effect it?

Second Assertor. Her eyes were not open to the means of her deliverance till that blessed moment: it was ordained she should undergo the persecution she did, in order to make her virtue more triumphant over sin and shame.

Opponent. Oh, gentlemen, these arguments will never be swallowed any where but in a conventicle.

Third Assertor. Sir, they will always have their due weight with every one but a reprobate.

Opponent. How, Sir!

The Opponent was so much incensed at these words, that he started from his seat, and was about to reply with his fist; but some of the more moderate part of the company interposed, and prevented the mischief that might otherwise have ensued. By their persuasions he sat down again; and the dispute would doubtless have been renewed, it may be with greater vehemence than before, if a drawer from a neighbouring tavern had not luckily come, and told him that two gentlemen, whose names he mentioned, desired to speak with him: on which he went away, perhaps to the great satisfaction of the assertors of Betty Canning's cause; who, if he had staid and continued his queries, might probably have been a little puzzled to find answers to them.

During the debate I have been repeating, every one in the room kept a profound silence; but afterwards the conversation became general; several other subjects were started by particular persons, but they were not listened to: the majority seemed to have their heads so full of Betty Canning, that they could scarce think or speak of any thing beside. It is true, indeed, they did not all give credit to her story; yet the positiveness with which they heard it affirmed, made the least credulous divided in their thoughts, and afraid to pass a judgment either on the one or the other side of the question. The reader will doubtless naturally suppose, that it was impossible for me to live in the world, and have any acquaintance in it, without having heard, long before I came to this place, much talk of Elizabeth Canning, her pitiful distress, miraculous preservation and escape, and all the other prodigies of that amazing story.

It is true, indeed, I was a stranger to no part of it; but then my conversation being chiefly among the gay part of the town, I was not much surprized that people who can find very little to employ their thoughts should be fond of a tale which had so much of the marvellous in it; as children, before they arrive at years capable of being instructed in more solid matters, listen with pleasure to their nurses stories of giants, fairies, and enchanted castles: as such I regarded all they said, and thought no farther of it. But when I heard grave citizens, men of business, of a sedate deportment, and good understanding in other things, argue with serious countenances on such a heap of wild absurdities, I cannot say whether my astonishment or indignation had most dominion over my faculties; but this I know, that both together destroyed all the little stock of patience I am master of, and would not suffer me to stay any longer to listen to

those insignificant debates which I found were likely to continue among this company.

CHAP. II.

RELATES SOME FARTHER INCIDENTS OF A PRETTY PARTICULAR NATURE, WHICH FELL UNDER THE AUTHOR'S OBSERVATION IN THE SAME EVENING'S INVISIBLE PROGRESSION.

THOSE turbulent emotions which the scene I had just come from being witness of had raised in me, being somewhat quieted by air and walking, I had the curiosity to call in at another great coffee-house, hoping I should find there something to give a turn to the present disposition of my mind; but I found that the remains of my ill-humour were not to be so soon dissipated as I had imagined. Here was indeed a vast deal of company; clerks in publick offices, lawyers, physicians, tradesmen, and some few divines, composed the promiscuous assembly: but all were engaged on the same dirty, draggle-tail subject, as one of our news-writers justly terms it; the names of Betty Canning, the Gipsy, and Mother Wells, resounded from each quarter of the crouded room, and the cause then depending between these creatures made the whole conversation at every table.

Here I would not be at the trouble of opening my Tablets, easily perceiving that nothing worthy of being recorded in them, or of communicating to the publick, was likely to ensue; and also that the smallest part of time I should waste in this company, would be paying too dear for any discourses I should hear from them. Accordingly I left the house after having staid there about seven minutes; but had not reached the next street, before a confused noise behind obliged me to stand up in the porch of a door till the hubbub was passed by.

The occasion of this uproar presently appeared. It was a poor fellow carried on a bier, with very little signs of life in him; his face covered with blood, which issued from his nose and mouth; his cloaths torn, that the naked flesh appeared in many places, but so deformed with bruises, that it could scarce be known for what it was; a mixed rabble of men, women, and children, followed, shouting, hallooing, and crying, it was good enough for him, and that they were glad he had got his reward.

I was startled at so much inhumanity, for I thought nothing could excuse such cruel treatment, though I doubted not but the fellow had been guilty of some attrocious crime: but I was soon undeceived in this point, and let into the whole affair; which was no other than a quarrel this fellow had entered into on account of Canning.

I had now no design in my head, no particular course to steer; but as I was entirely free from any engagement that evening, and thought it too soon to go home, I rambled from one street to another for a considerable time, yet without meeting any one thing sufficient to tempt my curiosity to make a farther enquiry into. Any observing reader may reasonably imagine, that the little satisfaction I had been able to reap in the visits I had made at the two coffee-houses I had been already in, would have hindered me from going into another, and indeed I was of that opinion myself: but I soon found I was mistaken, and so will he; I really ventured into a third; but the motive which excited me to do so was this—

As I was passing by, I perceived through the windows—for then the candles within were lighted up—several gentlemen with newspapers before them, on which they seemed to be discoursing with each other with a great deal of seriousness and gravity. As I have naturally an extreme passion for knowing the affairs of the world, those of Europe especially, I thought it highly eligible in me to hear what was said upon them by persons who had the appearance of some understanding in them. At the first table I came to were six or seven gentlemen, most of whom were some way or other concerned in the British herring-fishery: but though they talked very learnedly on the subject, it suited not my taste; so staid not long with them, but adjourned to the next company. These were merchants; who I found were greatly disconcerted at an article they had been just reading in relation to the strict engagements the French had entered into with the Indians, and the daily incursions those miscalled friends and allies made on the English colonies: but as I cannot pretend to any skill in commerce,

commerce, I did not ſpread my Tablets to receive the impreſſion of their diſcourſe; ſo can only ſay, in general, that they made very heavy complaints, and cried out, that if ſpeedy care were not taken to put a ſtop to thoſe proceedings, trade muſt be ruined, and our ſettlements in that part of the world utterly deſtroyed.

The third table was filled with perſons who ſeemed to be of no avocation, nor at all intereſted in any branch of buſineſs or publick affairs, but talked of every thing they had been reading merely as things which afforded matter for converſation. On my joining them, the magnanimity of the Pruſſian monarch was the topick; they extolled his wiſdom, his bravery, his temperance, his clemency, the encouragement he gave to merit whereſoever he found it; and all unanimouſly agreed that he was the father of his people, a bleſſing to the land he governed, and a pattern to his fellow-rulers of the earth. The juſt admiration I ever had of this truly great and moſt amiable prince, excluſive of that regard due to him as ſo near a relation to our gracious ſovereign, would certainly have kept me at that table as long as the company had continued ſpeaking on ſo agreeable a ſubject, if I had not been hurried from it by a propenſity, I believe more or leſs natural to all mankind, that of being moſt eager to explore what is hid from us with moſt care.

I obſerved at a little table, which was placed at one corner of the room, a good diſtance from the others, two elderly perſons, who ſeemed very earneſt in diſcourſe on ſome important and ſecret affair. By the winks, nods, and other ſignificant geſtures, I doubted not but that they were profound politicians, and were diſcuſſing ſome extraordinary tranſaction of the cabinet. Their heads were pretty cloſe together, and they ſpoke in ſo low a voice as to render it impoſſible to be heard by any one except each other: but this precaution had no efficacy when once my wonderful Tablets were diſplayed; which had this excellent property, of receiving the impreſſion of whatever was ſaid within the diſtance of nine yards, though uttered in the moſt ſoft whiſpers. On my drawing near to them, they ſeemed a little impatient for the coming of a perſon who they expected, and who preſently after appeared. As ſoon as he had ſeated himſelf, the following dialogue enſued—

Firſt Man. Oh, Mr. Slycraft, I am glad you are come! We were beginning to think you long.

Slycraft. I am ſomewhat beyond my hour, indeed; but I aſſure you nothing could have made me ſo but the good of the cauſe.

Second Man. Your zeal and diligence are not to be doubted. But let us hear what ſucceſs your endeavours have met with.

Slycraft. Truly not ſo much as I hoped. I do not think there is a more difficult thing in the world than getting people to ſubſcribe: I have been half the town over, and have been able to procure no more than three.

Firſt Man. Then I hope they are fat ones?

Slycraft. Pretty well, as times go. Credulous Woodcock, Eſq. has ſet his name for twenty guineas.

Firſt Man. Very handſome! Five or ſix hundred ſuch as he would do the buſineſs.

Slycraft. Aye; but where ſhall we find them?

Second Man. Well, but who are the others?

Slycraft. Then there is Mr. Simon Gooſly, the haberdaſher, ten guineas; but has promiſed to prevail on ſome friends of his to ſet their names very generouſly.

Second Man. I dare ſay he will do all he can. But have you ſeen Mrs. Waver?

Slycraft. Yes; but ſhe ſtill deſires a little more time to conſider; ſays ſhe will enquire farther into the affair, and hear what her friends think of it: and all I could get from her was an aſſurance, that if ſhe found it proper to ſubſcribe at all, ſhe would not ſet her name for leſs than an hundred pieces.

Firſt Man. Then we may be pretty certain of her; for I know ſhe will be directed by Mr. Cantwell, the Nonconformiſt preacher, who labours all he can to promote the cauſe in queſtion.

Second Man. Have you yet found an opportunity of talking with the orator?

Slycraft. I was with him above an hour; and when I had once convinced him that he ſhould find his account in it, he gave me his word and honour that he

would rant and roar till his chapel echoes in favour of the party.

First Man. That is well. All engines must be set to work, or the town will grow cool on this business, and begin to renew their clamour against the Jew bill, &c. The spirit of the people will have vent on something or another, and you know it behoves us to keep them silent on those scores: nothing ever did it more effectually than this we are upon. But it must be kept up for a time. I could wish, methinks, we had the Wesleys on our side.

Second Man. 'Tis a vain attempt. They are now grown too rich to accept of a small gratuity; and I much question whether their exhortations would answer the expence.

Slycraft. I am of your opinion. Besides, you know there is a person who can influence their congregations as much as any thing they can hear from the pulpit. But I will tell you what I have done to-day; I have engaged a clergyman of the established church to write a pamphlet in behalf of the cause we have in hand.

First Man. A clergyman of the established church employ his pen in behalf of such a cause! Pr'ythee, Slycraft, how didst thou work upon him? It must certainly be by some very extraordinary method.

Slycraft. The promise of a small present at first wrought upon his necessities; but on my telling him who and who were concerned in this business, and the motives which induced them to be so, the hopes of having a good fat living made him wholly ours.

First Man. Admirable!

Second Man. But may we depend upon his secrecy?

Slycraft. Never doubt that, as his own interest is concerned.

First Man. Hitherto things go pretty swimmingly on our side. But let me see the subscription-book: I have received five guineas to-day from Mr. Prim, and must insert his name.

Till now I was at the greatest loss, as it is probable the reader will also be, to know what all this meant, or in whose favour, or on what account, the subscription they talked of was raised; but on Mr. Slycraft's delivering the book to his friend, I looked over the shoulder of the latter as he opened it, and saw, in the first leaf, by way of title-page, these words, wrote in a very fair hand—

'A List of those worthy Persons who 'have subscribed to the Relief of 'Elizabeth Canning.'

The names underwritten were too numerous to be inserted; I shall therefore only say, that the sum of what was raised by their subscription amounted to little less than a thousand pounds. Monstrous abuse of charity! preposterous benevolence! which will hereafter reflect more shame than honour on the bestowers. 'Good God!' said I to myself, 'in an age when numberless, name-'less miseries, abound; when all our 'prisons labour with the weight of 'wretches confined within their walls, 'many for small debts which their ne-'cessities obliged them to contract, and 'some by unjust and malicious prose-'cutions; while every parish, nay almost 'every street, affords objects of real 'distress; while a girl sprung from the 'lowest dregs of the people, bred up to 'toil, a drudge, one of the very meanest 'class of servants, receives donations 'which she as little knows how to make 'a proper use of as to deserve!—a girl 'who, if she had really suffered all she 'pretends to have done, would indeed 'have had a claim to justice against those 'who had wronged her, but none to 'the bounties so lavishly bestowed upon 'her.'

These kind of meditations would doubtless have accompanied me to my own door, if they had not been interrupted, as well as my course towards home, by an unexpected accident, which the reader will find faithfully related in the succeeding chapter.

CHAP. III.

PRESENTS THE READER WITH AN ADVENTURE OF MUCH MORE IMPORTANCE TO THE PUBLICK THAN ANY CONTAINED IN THE TWO LAST FOREGOING CHAPTERS.

THE human heart is liable to many bad propensities, which, if not timely corrected by reason, shoot forth into practice, and become vices. But of these there are two sorts; the one born with

with us, and part of our nature; the other imbibed by the fatal prevalence of example, and rooted in us by cuſtom, which is a ſecond nature. Thoſe born with us, as the indulging them is attended with ſome pleaſure, urge in their defence the unconquerable deſire of gratifying the ſenſes: the luſtful man pleads the warmth of his conſtitution, and the ſtrong allurements of beauty; the ſoul of the ambitious triumphs and exults on every degree of power he gains over his fellow-creatures; the miſer thinks himſelf happy in counting over his bags, and being maſter of a thing that will purchaſe all things elſe; and the epicure feels no care, no ſorrow, while he is emptying the full-charged goblet, and palating the delicious viand. But what has the blaſphemer, the profane ſwearer, or the gameſter, to alledge in his vindication? Theſe are crimes in which nature has no part, nor are the ſenſes any way concerned in them, as they neither excite nor feel any ſatisfaction in them. One might therefore be apt to imagine, that men thus guilty ſinned merely for the ſake of ſinning. But I will not allow myſelf to think that there are many ſo impudently daring; a few diſtinguiſhed perſons will ſerve to bring up a mode, and every one knows that at preſent an indiſcriminate imitation is the reigning folly of the Engliſh nation.

Theſe were reflections which occurred to me after I came home, as I was about to tranſcribe the remaining part of my evening's progreſs out of my precious Tablets. I had ſome farther thoughts on the occaſion, but as they might ſeem more proper for the pulpit than a work of this nature, I ſhall add no more, but proceed to the narrative of that adventure which gave riſe to them.

As I was paſſing, in my way home, through a ſtreet of no very good repute, two perſons, from a little narrow alley, bolted haſtily upon me, to the no ſmall danger of my Inviſibilityſhip, if an agility not very common with me had not that inſtant enabled me to give a ſudden ſpring, by which I avoided the ruſh I muſt otherwiſe have received. They went on before me. The night was extremely dark; neither moon nor ſtars to aſſiſt the viſual ray: but, by the help of ſome candles burning in a ſhop not yet ſhut up, I diſtinguiſhed that the one was very richly dreſſed, and had much the appearance of a man of faſhion; and that the other was a fellow I had often ſeen on many occaſions, and whoſe character I was perfectly acquainted with.

Scarce is there a greater villain to be found in low life: I ſay in low life, becauſe ſhould any perſons in authority, or dignified with titles—which Heaven forbid!—ever appear in this nation, to deſerve ſuch black denominations, their crimes would, like their ranks, be diſtinguiſhed; and, though placed in an orb too high to be reached by the juſt vengeance of their oppreſſed fellow-creatures, would doubtleſs incur what Mr. Addiſon makes Cato prophetically ſay in relation to Julius Cæſar, on his endeavouring ta ſubvert the old Roman conſtitution, and become abſolute and perpetual dictator—

'Sure there are bolts in the right-hand of
'Jove,
'Red with uncommon wrath, to blaſt the
'man
'Who owes his greatneſs to his country's
'ruin.'

But to return to my little knave. The wretch is now called Mr. Makeplea; he was formerly ſervant to a lawyer whom I employed in ſeveral affairs I had the misfortune to be engaged in. Living with that gentleman a conſiderable time, he picked up ſome ſcraps of law, and all the terms and phraſes of that abſtruſe ſcience, by rote; knew how to take out a writ, ſet an officer to work, fill up a bail-bond, and procure evidences in a dubious cauſe. With this fund he had the impudence, after his maſter's death, to pretend he had been his clerk; got himſelf entered as an attorney, and has ever ſince practiſed as ſuch. His ſole buſineſs, however, as may be eaſily ſuppoſed, has always been among the very meaneſt ſort of people; fomenting litigious quarrels, and then making them up, after having drained the purſes on both ſides. I could not, therefore, avoid being amazed at ſeeing him in the company I now did; but my wonder ſoon ceaſed on hearing, as I was cloſe at their heels, the following diſcourſe between them—

Makeplea. It is very lucky, Mr. Coaxum, that I happened to be at home when you came. There are ſome of the profeſſion who would have ſcrupled to undertake this buſineſs; but, for my part, I am always ready to venture every thing to ſerve my friends.

Coaxum.

Coaxum. My dear Makeplea, you never lost any thing, nor ever shall, by our fraternity. I know there are some who will sneak their heads out of the collar, and leave their lawyer in the lurch.

Makeplea. Aye, faith, I narrowly escaped the pillory once. A vile dog who, after I had procured him three evidences, pretended a panick in his conscience, threw up his cause, and suffered himself to be nonsuited.

Coaxum. You know we scorn such doings. And I can tell you, this will be a pretty good job to you. We drained the fool's pocket of above an hundred pieces before we plaid upon credit; so that there is enough in bank to make you a handsome present for your trouble.

Makeplea. Well, but concerning this reversion. I hope he has lost enough to give an air of justice—that is, a *quantum sufficit*, for the making over his estate after the decease of his father?

Coaxum. Upwards of a thousand pounds; besides a gold watch and a diamond-ring, which he seems to set a high value upon. The two last Count Cogdy has agreed to sell him again at a great price; so that, all together, the sum will amount to a sufficient purchase of the reversion of an estate of four hundred a year; especially as the present possessor is not above fifty, and may live a long time. Besides, we hear the young fellow is going to be married to a woman of fortune; so that the deeds may be made redeemable. We do not regard his dirty acres, the ready rhino is what we want; and he may pay the money out of his wife's fortune, and be clear of us again.

Makeplea. Oh, then it will be a mortgage, rather than a sale. Who are with him?

Coaxum. Only Count Cogdy, Jack Hazard, and Tom Wheedle.

Makeplea. They cannot be witnesses, as I suppose they are parties concerned.

Coaxum. We are equal sharers in the booty; but the money was lost wholly to the count. However, there will be no want of witnesses; the landlord of the house and his son will set their hands.

These words brought them to a door, which being opened at the first knock by one of the most ill-looked fellows that ever disgraced human nature, they went through a long, dark, narrow passage, into a back-parlour; where I accompanied them, and was witness of a scene somewhat like what I remember to have seen some years ago in a play of Mrs. Centlivre's, called the Gamester. Count Cogdy, as he was called, sat leaning his arm upon a table, in a careless posture; Jack Hazard was walking backwards and forwards in the room humming an old tune; a gentleman, whose name I had not yet heard, had thrown himself across two chairs, with all the tokens of despair about him; Tom Wheedle stood near him, and, as we came in, was endeavouring to give him some consolation, in these terms—'Pr'ythee, dear Clerimont, do not be thus disconcerted; I have lost as much as you twenty times over, and as often recovered it again: these things will happen to gentlemen that play. Fortune, indeed, has been against you to-night, but may not always be so; one lucky hit at another time may bring all back.'

Clerimont made no answer, nor seemed to regard what he said, till hearing the name of Makeplea, and Count Cogdy beginning to instruct him in the business he was to do, that unfortunate gentleman started up at once, and staring somewhat wildly in the face of Makeplea, cried to him—

Clerimont. Are you the fiend who is to convey my soul, that is, my estate, into the regions of eternal darkness, whence it can never, never more return?

Makeplea. What do you mean, Sir?

Cogdy. The gentleman is only a little out of humour.—Faith, Mr. Clerimont you do not do well to behave in this fashion. You have lost some money indeed, but you have lost it fairly. I never take an advantage of any man, and shall be ready to give you your revenge at any time.

Hazard. Aye, I will say that for the count; he scorns a mean thing.

Cogdy. I believe there is not a more unlucky fellow at play in the world than myself, though I have happened to win to-night: yet, as I said before, I am ready to give Mr. Clerimont an opportunity of retrieving all he has lost whenever he pleases. For my part, I would stake all I am worth against a pair of shoe-buckles, rather than any gentleman should think I imposed upon him.

Coaxum. No, no, you are above any such thing.

Hazard.

Hazard. We all know that.

Makeplea. Come, come, gentlemen, this is doing nothing; all loſs of time, and every moment of mine is precious. There are two noblemen now waiting for me at the Garter tavern. Pray proceed to the buſineſs: let me know how the deeds I have brought with me are to be filled up.

Cogdy. I will tell you immediately; but firſt I muſt do juſtice to this gentleman.—Here, Sir, are the watch and ring you ſtaked; the value of which, you know, is added to the other ſums.

Clerimont put the one in his pocket, and the other on his finger, with a deep ſigh; and the count went on repeating to Makeplea the ſubſtance of what he was to write. The latter, at the end of every article, demanded of Clerimont whether he agreed to it; to which he ſullenly replied—'I do; I ſee no other remedy.' The lawyer having diſpatched his part, Clerimont was deſired to ſign and ſeal: he did both; but with ſuch a trembling hand, and viſible diſtraction of mind, that my heart bled for him. In delivering the writings to the count, he ſaid—

Clerimont. 'There, Sir—I ſuppoſe this is all that is required of me, and I may now depart?

Cogdy. No, no, we muſt have a bottle and a bird together, to ſhew we are all ſtill good friends.

Hazard. Aye, and each of us a wench, too. I know where there is a covey of as young, pretty, plump, partridges, as any in Covent Garden.

Clerimont. Rot your bottle, and your bird, and your wenches! I have done with them, and you, and the world, for ever!

In ſpeaking theſe words he ſnatched up his ſword and hat, and ran directly out of the houſe. As for me, I had as little inclination as himſelf to ſtay in the company of ſuch blood-ſuckers; but having never ſeen him before, I was curious to know ſomewhat more of him, and alſo how he would behave when alone, and at liberty to ruminate on the misfortune he had plunged himſelf into; ſo followed his ſteps with all the ſpeed I could.

It was not difficult to keep pace with him; for though he gained groun of me at firſt, he ſoon halted, and gave me an opportunity of coming up with him. Never did man traverſe the ſtreets with more diſordered motions; croſſing the way an hundred times, I believe, within the ſpace of half a quarter of a mile, without having the leaſt occaſion to do ſo. Sometimes he would run as if in purſuit of ſomebody, and ſometimes ſtand quite ſtill. And it was well the darkneſs of the night befriended him, otherwiſe whoever had met him would doubtleſs have taken him to be mad.

In this faſhion he went part of the Strand, and turned down one of thoſe ſtreets leading to the water-ſide. He ſtopped about the middle of it at a door, and had his hand upon the knocker; but a ſudden thought coming that inſtant into his head, he left it, without making the ſignal for admittance, and walked ſlowly to the end of the ſtreet; where leaning on a little wall that overlooks the river, he remained for ſome minutes in the moſt thoughtful and contemplative attitude; then ſaid to himſelf—

'How profound, how ſolemn, is the 'ſilent ſcene! inviting to a certain reſt 'from miſery and ſhame! Here, with- 'in the boſom of this friendly element, 'may all my follies and misfortunes be 'hid for ever from the talking world!'

I feared nothing leſs would enſue, than that I ſhould ſee him preſently attempt to do as his words had hinted; I therefore drew as near to him as I could, in order to prevent ſo bad an effect of his deſpair. Here I cannot help remarking, that if the thing had happened as I expected, and Clerimont had found himſelf ſnatched from his fate by an Inviſible hand, he would doubtleſs have imagined his preſervation owing to the interpoſition of ſome Supernatural Being, and reported it as a miracle.

But how he would have acted on ſuch an odd occaſion, is uncertain; for, after a pauſe, and diſburthening himſelf of ſome few ſighs, he ſtarted from the poſture he had been in, and cried—

'No, it muſt not be; I have ſome buſi- 'neſs ſtill for life—revenge on the curſt 'cheat, the villain, that has undone 'me! Love, too, demands ſomething 'from me; but by what means I ſhall 'repay that mighty debt, I know not. 'Oh, Charlotte! Charlotte! on how 'loſt a wretch haſt thou beſtowed thy 'heart!'

Theſe words were uttered with a groan which ſeemed to cleave his breaſt, and were the laſt I heard from him at that time. He turned back, and went haſtily to the houſe where he had firſt ſtopped: the door was opened on his knocking; and

and too suddenly shut again for me to have entered with him if I had intended it; but the variety of accidents presented to me in this evening's ramble, had already sufficiently filled my head, and made me glad to retire to my repose.

CHAP. IV.

RELATES SOME PASSAGES WHICH MAY PROBABLY DRAW SIGHS FROM MANY A TENDER HEART OF BOTH SEXES.

THE next morning, running over in my mind the detail of the transactions of the evening before, the vexation I had received on the score of Betty Canning very much subsided, and I looked upon the whole thing as below a serious consideration. I could not help, indeed, retaining some concern that the people of England should be so infatuated as to suffer their thoughts to be led astray and alienated from affairs of the greatest consequence by such an idle story; but as I doubted not but that the imposition she had been guilty of would be detected, though her abettors might perhaps find means to screen her person from the punishment, I became more easy, and resolved to banish, as much as possible, all remembrance of it.

But my ideas were widely different in regard to poor Clerimont. As much a stranger as he was to me, I was convinced, by what I had seen and heard, that as he had no stock of ready money to prevent the mortgage he had made of his reversion, so I was equally assured, by his despair, that he had no visible means of raising a sum sufficient to redeem it. His calling on the name of Charlotte with so much vehemence, made me also not doubt but that he had some tender attachment, which he feared would be broke through by what he had done.

Though I know no vice for which I have a more real contempt than the love of gaming, yet the age of this gentleman, which could not exceed three and twenty, seemed to me a very moving plea in his behalf; and the graces of his mien and aspect so much interested me in his favour, that I less blamed his inadvertency than compassionated the misfortune it had brought him into. In fine, his person and his sufferings had made a very strong impression on me; he was the first object of my waking thoughts; and my impatience to be better acquainted with his circumstances, obliged me to leave my bed some hours before the time in which I was accustomed to do so. I rose in a hurry, transcribed what I have been relating, and got the dialogues expunged from my Tablets by the pure fingers of my little virgin; then hastened to the house where I had seen Clerimont enter the night before, and which, by the help of some lamps in the street, I had taken sufficient notice of to be able to know again. The door was luckily open when I came to it. A servant-maid, who seemed to have more inclination to hold a gossip's tale than to do the business she was hired for, stood leaning with both her hands upon her mop, very earnest in discourse with one of her own occupation in the neighbourhood. A few words served to convince me that these wenches were descanting on the affairs of the families they lived in; which, as I was not at present in a humour to pry into, I staid not to hear what was said, but went directly into the house, and up stairs, supposing Clerimont might be lodged in the first floor. I was not deceived; I found him writing at his bureau in the dining-room. A letter lay by him directed to Count Cogdy: this was folded, and ready for sealing, so it was not in my power to examine the contents; but his pen, on my entrance, was employed on another; which, looking over his shoulder, I saw was dictated in the following terms—

'My only dear, and for ever dear CHARLOTTE!

'A thousand heart-rending sighs, a 'thousand pangs more terrible 'than any death can inflict, accompany 'every syllable of this distracted epistle! 'I foresee the anguish it will give you, 'and feel all the weight of yours added to my own. Oh, Charlotte! I 'must see you no more! That love, so 'long cemented by the utmost proofs 'of mutual tenderness, and so near being fulfilled in a happy union, must be 'now broke off at once—dissolved for 'ever! I have renounced all claim to 'every future good, and justly incurred 'the fate that now attends me. A few

'hours

'hours will inform you, that I either 'do not exist at all, or exist only to 'be a vagrant! a wretched exile from 'father, country, friends, and you, 'more dear than all! In fine, my 'Charlotte, such is the sad necessity to 'which I have reduced myself, as com-'pels me to do a thing which nature 'most abhors; I go this morning either 'to kill or be killed: which of these two 'shall happen, is in the hand of Heaven; 'each equally tears me from every 'earthly comfort. I chose to acquaint 'you previously with this accident, to 'the end you may be the less surprized 'when you shall hear it from the mouth 'of others. I can say no more. Fare-'wel, thou loveliest, best, and dearest 'of thy sex! Hate not the memory of 'the undone

'CLERIMONT.

'P. S. As I have rendered myself 'unworthy of preserving any marks 'of your affection, I return the 'ring with which you blessed my 'finger in our happier days. Ac-'cept once more my last adieu! 'May endless blessings await you, 'superior, if possible, to my woes!'

This unhappy gentleman dissembled not in the lines he wrote; his heart now laboured with agonies greater than could be expressed with words, and shewed themselves in every look and gesture. After having carefully inclosed the ring, and put both that and the letter under a cover, he ordered a chairman to be called; and delivering to him both these dispatches, and telling him where they were to be carried, he proceeded to give some farther instructions—'This, to Miss 'Charlotte, you are to leave with her 'servant, with orders to give it to her 'lady when she is stirring; this, to Count 'Cogdy, requires an immediate answer, 'which you must wait for.' The fellow, having assured him that he would be punctual in obeying his commands, went on his errand; and Clerimont continued walking backwards and forwards in the room, with a motion extremely discomposed; then threw himself down on a settee, and presently seemed buried, as it were, in a profound reverie.

I am pretty certain it was a full half hour before he exchanged this fixed and death-like position for one in a quite contrary extreme; his looks and gestures now, methought, had somewhat like frantick in them; he beat his head against the wainscot, stamped, and ever and anon burst into the most vehement exclamations; some of which are these—'How unhappy a creature is man! The 'very reason we are so proud of makes 'us miserable! The brutes, equally 'void of passions as of sorrow, neither 'feel torments here, nor dread a future 'hell! What will poor Charlotte say 'on reading of my letter! How will 'my father support the story of my fate, 'when it shall reach his ears! Wretch, 'wretch, that I am! born to be a curse 'to all who love me!'

The return of the chairman brought him a little to his senses, and he demanded hastily whether he had got an answer from Count Cogdy; to which the man replied—

Chairman. No, Sir. I went there first, but the people of the house told me he was not stirring, nor they believed would be for a great while; so I went on to Madam Charlotte's, and left the letter with her maid, as your honour bid me: but I had not got above half the street, before her footboy ran after me, and said his lady would speak to me; on which I went back with him.

Clerimont. Charlotte already up! that's strange.—What did she say to you?

Chairman. Sir, she only asked where the gentleman was that sent the letter by me, and whether you were alone. I told her you were at home, and that there was nobody with you that I saw. She said it was very well, and I came away; went again to the count's, and waited there till his own man told me that his master had not been in bed above two hours, and he was sure would not rise till twelve or one o'clock at soonest; said I might leave the letter, and come about that time for an answer. Now as I did not know whether that would be proper, I thought it best to bring it back.

Clerimont. You did well. I shall see him myself.

On this the chairman laid down the letter on the table; and finding Clerimont had no farther commands for him, withdrew. Clerimont then fell into a second pause, but it lasted not long, and he cried out—'Yes, I will go. And 'perhaps 'tis better that he did not see 'my billet; he might have found some 'way to evade the challenge that I sent

'him; but I shall now surprize and 'force him to accept it.'

While he was speaking, he stepped to the closet, and brought out a pair of pocket-pistols, with some ammunition to load them with: he was just beginning to perform that work, when the maid of the house came up, and told him a lady desired to speak with him. Clerimont turned hastily about; but before he had time to speak, his fair guest was in the room. Charlotte, (for it was she herself, but extremely disordered both in her dress and looks) on finding how Clerimont was employed, thus accosted him—

Charlotte. Oh, Clerimont! Clerimont! what means that cruel letter you just now sent me? Wherefore these dreadful preparations? Tell me, this instant tell me, or I shall die with apprehension!

Clerimont. Ah, Charlotte! never till now unwelcome to my sight, why, in this fatal moment, dost thou set before me that angelick form, which serves but to remind me more of the heaven I have lost!

Charlotte. Shock not my soul with this despair, yet cruelly conceal from me the cause! I have a right to be made the partner of your griefs as well as joys. Speak, then, I conjure you; let me know all.

Clerimont. I cannot.

Charlotte. You love me not, if you hide aught from me. The worst of evils could not give me half the pain as this uncertainty. Clear, then, the tempest on your brow; compose your mind; remove those murderous instruments from my sight, and——Ha! what's here!

In pointing towards the pistols, she saw the letter directed to Count Cogdy; which she hastily snatched up, and went on, saying—

Charlotte. A letter to that infamous villain!—Ah! then I guess what has happened; some cursed gaming quarrel!—Clerimont, I must read this letter.

Clerimont. You may; it will in part reveal what my tongue has not the power to utter.

Ever since my coming into the room, I had been extremely impatient to see the contents of this billet; so while the lady, with a trembling hand, was breaking open the seal, I slipped behind her, and read, at the same time she did, these lines—

'SIR,

'I Remember that, in the midst of my 'confusion last night, you offered 'to give me my revenge whenever I 'should demand it; which I now do, 'and expect you will meet me within 'an hour in the long field behind the 'bason in Mary-le-Bon, armed with 'sword and pistol; for it is not with 'cards or dice we now must try our 'skill. You have left me nothing but 'my life to lose, and I am impatient 'till I stake it against yours. Come 'without a second; for I know no gentleman whom I would demean so far 'as to engage him with any of your infamous associates. If you refuse to 'comply with this summons, which 'does you too much honour, you may 'depend that, the first time I see you, 'in what place soever it be, I shall make 'you an example to all scoundrels, 'cheats, and cowards. So no more 'at present from

'CLERIMONT.

'P. S. Send your answer by the 'bearer.'

Charlotte. Then you would fight! would hazard a life so precious to me, only in revenge for being defrauded of a paltry sum! Pray how much have you lost?

Clerimont. My all.

Charlotte. Be more explicit.

He then related to her all the particulars of his misfortune; which, as the reader is already acquainted with, would be needless to repeat. When he had given over speaking, Charlotte, with the greatest serenity and sweetness, said to him—

Charlotte. And is this all that has disconcerted you in so terrible a manner?

Clerimont. What means my Charlotte? Am I not a beggar! irrecoverably a beggar!

Charlotte. How can that be, when you say the writings will be returned to you on payment of a thousand pounds? and am not I in possession of eight times that sum, which, with myself, you are shortly to be master of?

Clerimont. Plunder my Charlotte! No, forbid it honour, justice, love! First let me perish!

Charlotte.

Charlotte. Be not so rash. You must, you shall accept it.

Clerimont. Oh, Charlotte! could I abuse such goodness, I were a villain, meaner, viler far than he that has undone me!

Charlotte. Indeed I will not be denied: and if you persist in this obstinacy, will go myself in person, pay the money, and redeem the obligation.

Clerimont. Oh, speak not, think not, of such a thing, unless you wish to see me turn against myself one of those weapons I intended for my adversary!

Charlotte. Hold, Clerimont! Forbear to fright me thus!—Just as you spoke, a sudden thought started into my head, as if there were a way to rid you of this incumbrance without any expence either to yourself or me.

Clerimont. How! By what miracle!

Charlotte. The project is not yet quite fashioned in my brain. But you must come with me to my lodgings, for I dare not trust you with yourself. As we go, perhaps I may be able to bring my scheme to more perfection.

Clerimont. Oh, Charlotte, thy softness quite unmans me!

Charlotte. No, it is your own despair unmans you. Let me prevail on you to give only some respite to these horrible ideas.

Clerimont. Well, you must be obeyed. I will defer the execution of my intentions till another day.

Charlotte seemed transported at having won thus far upon him; and a coach being called, they both went into it. I listened to the directions given where to drive; and, eager to know what turn this affair would take, followed on foot as fast as I was able.

CHAP. V.

MAY POSSIBLY BECOME THE SUBJECT OF SOME FUTURE COMEDY, AS THERE IS NOTHING IN THE STORY THAT CAN BE OBJECTED TO AT THE LICENCE-OFFICE.

AMONG all the indefatigable enquiries I had so long been making after things intended to be kept secret, never had my curiosity met with a greater disappointment than it did at the time I am speaking of. I arrived at the house where Charlotte lodged the very moment that the coach which brought that lady and her lover thither was discharged and driving off; and had the mortification to see the door shut when I was not at the distance of above ten paces from it. Every present minute, however, flattering me with the hopes that the succeeding ones would be more successful, I waited, though I cannot say with much patience, about two hours; no one having any occasion, I suppose, either to go in or out. At last a friendly baker knocked at the door; which being opened, I took the opportunity to slip in while he delivered a loaf of bread to the servant of the house.

I went up stairs, and found the persons I sought for in the dining-room. But here, alas! I was a second time disappointed; the grand consultation between them was over before my entrance, and what I heard after I came in could not make me able to form any judgment of the subject they had been upon. I could only know that something of great moment had been concluded, as the reader will easily perceive by the following short dialogue—

Charlotte. You cannot imagine how much you have obliged me by this confession; but I will not detain you, lest the villain should be gone out. Remember to fix the appointment at seven, or between seven and eight, this evening.

Clerimont. Yes, yes.

Charlotte. By that time I shall be able to get every thing in order; and you will see I shall play my part as well as the best actress of them all. Do you take care that no unguarded look or word gives the count any room to suspect you are less in good-humour than you pretend to be.

Clerimont. Fear not; I shall be cautious not to spoil so good a plot by my ill performance.

Charlotte. If it succeeds, as I have not the least doubt it will, the story will be a subject of mirth for us as lasting as our lives.

Clerimont. And as lasting a subject for my admiration of the wit and contrivance of my dear, dear Charlotte.

Charlotte. Well, well, defer your encomiums till a more seasonable opportunity. I long, methinks, to have this

buſineſs over; and it is high time for you to begin to ſet the firſt wheel of our machine in motion.

Clerimont. I am going. Adieu, my love.

He accompanied theſe words with a very tender and paſſionate ſalute, then left the room. Though I eaſily perceived that Charlotte had ſomewhat of great importance to tranſact in this affair, yet, as I could not be in two places at once, I choſe to follow Clerimont. He went directly to Cogdy's lodgings; and, on aſking if he were at home, was ſhewed into a handſome parlour; where, after waiting about a minute, the count's ſervant came to him, and ſaid his maſter had not been long out of bed, and was not quite dreſſed, but deſired he would walk up; which he did, with his Inviſible attendant cloſe behind him. The count no ſooner ſaw him enter, than he ran to embrace him with a French complaiſance, ſaying at the ſame time—

Cogdy. Dear Clerimont, I am glad to ſee you.

Clerimont. My dear count, a lucky morning to you. I behaved ſomewhat oddly laſt night, and could not be eaſy till I came and aſked your pardon.

Cogdy. Oh, Sir, you have it, you have it; I thought no more of it. I know it is natural for a gentleman to be a little out of humour at firſt loſing his money.

Clerimont. But I was leſs excuſable than you imagine; for, to confeſs the truth, I had, in Bank-bills, upwards of two thouſand pounds lying in my bureau at home; ſo was under no neceſſity either of playing upon tick, or of troubling a lawyer to mortgage the reverſion of my eſtate.

Cogdy. Is it poſſible! Are you in earneſt?

Clerimont. To convince you I am ſo, you ſhall have the teſtimony of your own eyes. See here, count—and here.

In ſpeaking this, he took out of his pocket-book ſeveral bills to the amount of the ſum he had mentioned. The count ſtretched his eyes broad open; looked at the bills, ſeemed much ſurprized, and ſaid—

Cogdy. Theſe are Bank-bills, indeed!

Clerimont. Aye, I can turn them into ready ſpecie at any banker's in town.

Cogdy. Well, I cannot help wondering how a man who had two thouſand pounds by him could ſuffer himſelf to be diſconcerted at the loſs of one.

Clerimont. Hang it, it was not the loſs of the money that vexed me; but I had the hyppo, and that damned hyp makes one affront one's beſt friends.

Cogdy. So, then, I ſuppoſe you will redeem your mortgage?

Clerimont. Time enough for that. But, now I think on it, you offered me my revenge, and I'll e'en try my chance once more.

Cogdy. As how?

Clerimont. Why, ſtake one of theſe thouſands againſt my mortgage, ſo either win the horſe or loſe the ſaddle.

Cogdy. With all my heart: whenever you pleaſe.

Clerimont. Let it be to-night, then.

Cogdy. Agreed. Will you ſtay and dine with me?

Clerimont. I am engaged with a young fellow juſt come to town, and to the poſſeſſion of a great eſtate; but I will meet you at night, and perhaps bring him with me.

Cogdy. Do; I ſhall be glad of his acquaintance.

Clerimont. We knew one another in the country: he will go any where with me.—But, harkye, count, I don't like that houſe we were in laſt night; every thing in it, methinks, has the face of poverty and ill-luck. My young ſpark is vaſtly nice, and will be apt to turn up his noſe at it. Can't you think of a more agreeable place?

Cogdy. I know of ſeveral. The only reaſon that makes me chuſe to go thither ſo often is, becauſe I think it the moſt ſafe. This curſed act of parliament has laid ſuch reſtriction on us who love play, that it is not every where we dare venture to indulge ourſelves in that diverſion.

Clerimont. What objection have you to Mixum's, in ****** Street?

Cogdy. 'Tis a good houſe, and excellent accommodation. But don't you know that it was ſearched three or four nights ago by a whole poſſe of conſtables?

Clerimont. Yes, but they found nothing of what they came to look for; therefore the moſt ſecure at preſent, as they will ſcarce come again in haſte.

Cogdy. Well, then, we will meet there, if you pleaſe. At what hour?

Clerimont. Seven, or a little after, if it ſuits you.

Cogdy.

Cogdy. Extremely well: then we shall have the whole evening before us.

He was about to take his leave, and had rose up for that purpose, when Wheedle, Hazard, and Coaxum, came all together into the room; they seemed a little surprized at seeing him there, but saluted him with their usual familiarity.

Hazard. Hah! dear Clerimont, good morning to you.

Wheedle. Now you look like yourself again; you were quite another man last night.

Coaxum. Aye, faith, you must expect to be well roasted.

Clerimont. I know I deserve it. But you must defer your sarcasms till night, for I am in great haste at present; so, gentlemen, your servant.

He was going out of the room with these words; but, just as he came to the door, he turned back, and said to Count Cogdy—

Clerimont. Be sure, count, not to forget to bring the writings with you.

Cogdy. No, no; they have never been out of my pocket since you delivered them to me last night.

There passed no more between them: Clerimont went hastily down stairs, and I gladly would have followed him; but Hazard and Wheedle happened to stand between the door and the corner where I had unluckily posted myself, so that it was impossible for me to remove my quarters without running a very great risque of being felt either by the one or the other. During the short time I was compelled to stay, I heard the following conversation, which I would not trouble my readers with the repetition of, but to shew what monsters of mankind these degenerate wretches are who get their livelihood by gaming.

Coaxum. What does he mean by writings? Sure he is not going to redeem his mortgage!

Cogdy. No; but he is going to send a thousand, or, it is likely, two thousand pounds after it. We have made an appointment to play again to-night.

Hazard. What, upon tick?

Wheedle. Phoo! that is doing of nothing; the fool has no more estates in reversion to make over.

Cogdy. You cannot imagine me so weak as to lose my time with a fellow that has no money nor effects; no, no, I always go upon good grounds. I tell you he has two thousand pounds in Bank-bills; he shewed them to me.

Hazard. How did he come by them?

Cogdy. 'Tis no matter to us how he came by them; we are sure of making them ours before we sleep.

Wheedle. They must certainly be bills his father has intrusted him with to buy stock either for himself or some of his friends in the country. The young fellow will hang himself to-morrow, when he reflects on what he has done.

Hazard. Let him hang himself, when we have got all he has to lose.

Cogdy. Aye, aye. But I can tell you better news than this: he brings a rich young heir with him; one that knows nothing of the world; a mere sap, a greenhorn. There will be fleecing, my boys!

Just as the count had done speaking, some little noise in the street made them all run to the windows; by which means I got the so much wished-for opportunity of escaping from my confinement. When I found myself at liberty, I began to consider not only on what I had seen and heard, but also on what I had not seen nor heard. I was still as much in the dark as ever as to Charlotte's contrivance, and could not keep myself from fretting at the many disappointments I had met with on that account; I was doomed, however, to receive yet one more.

Though I doubted not but when the gamesters met the whole would be laid open to me, yet the time seemed too tedious for my impatience. I wanted to know the business of the plot, before I saw it acted, and set myself to think on the most probable means to accomplish my designs. Accordingly I went to the lodgings of Charlotte, hoping to find Clerimont there, and discover something farther by the discourse they would have together; but, to my great mortification, perceived the rooms quite empty, excepting a little lap-dog lying on a cushion before the fire. I had now no other resource than to go home to dinner, which I did; and after having got my Tablets made ready to receive a new impression, diverted myself in the best manner I could till the hour arrived which enabled me to explore what at present appeared so mysterious to me.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

WILL PUT A FINAL PERIOD TO THE SUSPENCE OF MY READERS, IN RELATION TO CLERIMONT AND CHARLOTTE.

AS precious a thing as time is, and as much as I always knew the real value of it, the hours, methought, moved ſlowly on till the clock ſtruck ſeven, and told me that I might now hope for the full eclairciſſement of an adventure I had already taken ſo much fruitleſs pains to explore. Pretty ſecure, however, that I ſhould not loſe my labour any more on this occaſion, I went with great glee and jollity of mind to the houſe of Mr. Mixum. Count Cogdy and his three aſſociates came preſently after, and were ſhewn into the beſt room, where I accompanied them. On their calling for wine, Mixum came up with it himſelf, to pay his compliments, as not having ſeen them for a conſiderable time; and there enſued ſome diſcourſe concerning the ſearch-warrant that had been granted againſt the houſe, the manner in which thoſe perſons who were there had made their eſcape from the officers, and ſuch like affairs; which not being at all material to my purpoſe, I regarded not, nor ſpread my Tablets to receive.

Within about half an hour Clerimont and his young friend appeared. The firſt ſight of the latter extremely ſtruck me; I thought I had ſomewhere ſeen that face, but when, or where, or on what occaſion, I could not preſently recollect, and it was ſome minutes before I knew this ſeeming beau for a real belle; in fine, it was no other than Charlotte herſelf. She was, indeed, ſo artfully diſguiſed in all points, that a perſon much better acquainted with her features might have been deceived; her cheeks, which had naturally no more red in them than was neceſſary to preſerve her complexion from the character of a dead paleneſs, were now, by the help of carmine or Portugal paſte, of a high ruddy colour; her eye-brows, which were of a fine light brown, were now black as jet; and that ſweet and modeſt air ſo becoming in the amiable Charlotte, converted into one all bold and rakiſh.

Clerimont, with a well-diſſembled gaiety in his voice and countenance, preſented her to the company, telling them he had taken the liberty to introduce a friend, whoſe converſation he doubted not would be agreeable to them. They received her with the greateſt politeneſs and good-breeding: for I muſt here obſerve, that though theſe men, either through the calamities of the times, or their own miſmanagement and ill-conduct, were reduced to the wretched courſe they now took for ſubſiſtence, they had all of them been endowed with a liberal education, and knew how to behave like perſons of real honour and faſhion whenever they found it ſuitable to their intereſt to do ſo. The glaſs went round two or three times, while they talked only on ordinary matters; but our fair Amazon being impatient, I ſuppoſe, to put the finiſhing ſtroke to the ſtratagem ſhe had formed, ſtarted up on a ſudden, and ſaid—

Charlotte. Well, but, gentlemen, how are we to paſs the evening? I hope in ſomething more agreeable than mere chit-chat? Clerimont talked of play, and I ſee you have implements ready.

Cogdy. Sir, we amuſe ourſelves that way ſometimes; and, if you chuſe it, ſhall be ready to oblige you.

Charlotte. Oh, by all means. I love play extravagantly: the muſick of a dice-box is to me beyond all Handel's operas and oratorios; here is more real harmony than in the ſpheres themſelves, and I could dance eternally to the ſound. Come, gentlemen, which of you will engage me? I have ſome looſe pieces in my pocket, which I am ready to throw away, if chance ſhould ſo determine.

Hazard. Then, Sir, I am your man, if you think fit; for I know the count has made an agreement to play with Clerimont on a very particular occaſion.

Charlotte. Then, Sir, I will content myſelf a while with being a by-ſtander.

Hazard. You need not, Sir; you ſee here are more tables than one.

Charlotte. Aye; but I chuſe to bet on my friend's ſide.

Hazard. Nay, as you pleaſe for that: we ſhall any of us be ready to take you up.

The count and Clerimont being now in an attitude to play, and the writings laid down on the one ſide, and a thouſand

pound

pound Bank-bill on the other, Charlotte cried out—

Charlotte. What! paper againſt parchment! Theſe are the oddeſt ſtakes I ever ſaw. Yours, Clerimont, I think, is a thouſand pounds?

Cogdy. I aſſure you, Sir, that mine is the full equivalent.

Charlotte. I believe ſo. But, before you begin, you muſt give me leave to ſpeak a word or two.

Cogdy. As many as you pleaſe, Sir.

Charlotte. It is only this—You muſt loſe, count.

Cogdy. Muſt loſe, Sir!

Charlotte. Aye, Sir, muſt loſe.

Cogdy. That, Sir, will happen, as Fortune ſhall decree.

Charlotte. Sir, I ſtand in the place of Fortune, and tell you that you muſt loſe thoſe writings to Clerimont.

Hazard. What means all this!

Cogdy. I do not underſtand you, Sir.

Charlotte. I will ſpeak plainer. Your falſe dice will be of no ſervice to you at this time. You muſt willingly return to Clerimont that deed of reverſion which you drew him in to ſign as a ſecurity for money you had baſely cheated him of: I ſay willingly; for, if you do not, I am come prepared with means to force you to it.

Cogdy. Sir, I ſcorn both your words and threats. I never cheated any man; nor will part with what chance has beſtowed upon me.

Hazard. 'Sdeath! ſhall we be bullied by ſuch a prig!

Charlotte. None of your big words; I have that will ſilence you. See here, the copy of a warrant from Juſtice Ferret, to apprehend and bring before him the bodies of George Van Hellmock, alias Count Cogdy, John Hazard, Thomas Wheedle, and William Coaxum. The original of this is in the hands of perſons who, on the leaſt ſtamp of my foot, will come up and put it in execution.

The gameſters now looked on each other with all the marks of conſternation; but, before they had time to make any reply to what Charlotte had ſaid, Mixum, all pale and trembling, came running into the room, and ſaid—

Mixum. Oh, gentlemen, we are all undone! Three or four conſtables are at the door; one of my drawers ſaw them as he went out to carry a pint of wine to a neighbour's houſe; and there is a young man below, too, who I dare ſay is a ſpy; for he does not ſtay in the room, but walks backwards and forwards in the entry, and looks at every body as they paſs by; ſo that there is no eſcaping, either one way or the other.

Charlotte. He tells you truth; the perſon he ſpeaks of is planted there by me, and, on my giving the ſignal, will call in his myrmidons; ſo that you have nothing for it but to deliver the writings quietly to Clerimont: if you do this, I will inſtantly go down, and ſend away the officers, under pretence that the information was wrong, and that no gameſters are here.

Cogdy. Confuſion! What is to be done!

Hazard. 'Sdeath, count, do not part with the writings! We'll fight our way through them!

Charlotte. Nay, then, I give the ſignal.

She advanced towards the door with theſe words; but Mixum threw himſelf between, and, with the moſt pity-moving geſture, ſaid—

Mixum. Hold, Sir, I beſeech you! Conſider, I never offended you! Do not ruin me and my houſe for ever!

Clerimont. Oh, you will be provided with lodgings in Bridewell, and fare no worſe than theſe worthy gentlemen here, your cuſtomers.

Cogdy. Well, I did not think Mr. Clerimont would have turned informer.

Clerimont. Nor did I think I had aſſociated myſelf with common ſharpers, cheats, and villains, till laſt night convinced me of it.

Charlotte. Theſe altercations are only loſs of time; the officers will be impatient. Speak, count, reſolve at once; ſhall I diſmiſs, or call them to the exerciſe of their function?

Cogdy. Hell and the devil!—What ſay you, gentlemen?

Wheedle. E'en give up the writings, and the devil go with them!

Coaxum. Aye, aye, give them up.

Hazard. Since there is no remedy, I give my vote.

Cogdy. Nothing vexes me ſo much as to be thus outwitted, gulled, tricked.—There, Mr. Clerimont, take back your mortgage. But I muſt tell you, Sir, that you have not acted like a gentleman.

Clerimont. I threw off the gentleman when I condeſcended to play in ſuch

such company. A gamester is the lowest and most infamous of all characters; nay, the most dangerous, too; worse even than a highway robber: he takes but part; you plunder, without remorse, the whole fortune of him whom you decoy into your snares. Nor can there be any excuse from your necessities, while we have so numerous a fleet and standing army, which are continually wanting recruits, and refuse none who have health and vigour.

Cogdy. Sir, you have got what you wanted; so pray keep your remonstrances to yourself.

Charlotte. Aye, aye, advice is lost on such hardened profligates. Come, let us go.

Clerimont. I attend you.

Neither Clerimont nor his fair champion said any more, but went directly out of the room: a volley of curses from the mouths of all these miscreants pursued their steps. I had no inclination to stay where I was; but, just as I passed the door, I heard Jack Hazard, who was the most violent of the four, say to his companions—'It is that saucy, pert, 'young coxcomb, that has spirited up 'Clerimont to do all this: but if ever I 'meet him in a convenient place, I'll 'pink him—I'll make a loop-hole in his 'flesh big enough to let out twenty such 'puny souls.'

I could not forbear laughing within myself at this menace; which, though it shewed the villainous disposition of the wretch who spoke it, I knew it was impossible ever to reach the person it was levelled against. The amiable and witty Charlotte kept her promise; and, on her coming down stairs, gave orders to the young man who waited her commands to send away the constables; after which she took coach with her lover, attended with as many blessings and good-wishes from Mixum, as she had been loaded with curses from those above.

As I could expect no more from this adventure than the retributions of Clerimont to his beloved Charlotte, for the happy deliverance she had given him from destruction, and which I could easily conceive without hearing, I returned to my own apartment, in order to get my Tablets made ready for the acquisition of some new discovery. I must not, however, take leave of these lovers, without letting the publick know that a marriage between them, which had some time before been agreed upon, is now consummated; and that Clerimont, sincerely touched with the danger he has escaped, has made a firm resolution never to play but for small sums, and for those only with persons whose honour and integrity he is well assured of. As for the gamesters, they still continue to infest this great town, like Satan, watching to devour all the prey they can get into their clutches. If this little narrative may warn any person to avoid the snare, the pains I have taken to explain it will be well rewarded.

CHAP. VII.

CONTAINS SOMETHING WHICH PERHAPS THERE ARE MORE LADIES THAN ONE WILL NOT THINK THEMSELVES OBLIGED TO THE AUTHOR FOR REVEALING.

THERE is no resentment so implacable and lasting as that which is occasioned by love converted into hatred by ill treatment; and by the more slow degree this passion rises in our minds, the more virulent it becomes after having once gained possession.

Cleanthes, a gentleman of good family, great worth, and opulent estate, loved to the most romantick excess a young woman who, excepting a tolerable share of beauty, had no one real charm to recommend her to a person of his character. She was meanly born, more meanly educated; she was silly, vain, capricious, and of a reputation not quite unblemished. Yet did he no sooner become acquainted with her, than he broke off the addresses he had long made to a lady of great merit and fortune; and, in a short time, contrary to all the remonstrances and dissuasions of his friends, publickly married her.

Being a husband made him not less a lover. His obsequiousness is not to be paralleled; his whole study was to please her; every succeeding day brought with it an addition of his dotage of her; he was always happy in her presence, never easy in her absence; and, to use Shakespeare's expression—

'Appetite increas'd by what it fed on.'

Auglara, for so she is called, had so little sense of the happiness she enjoyed,

joyed, or affection or gratitude for the man who bestowed it on her, that she presently gave the greatest loose to her too amorous inclinations; thought of nothing but engaging new admirers; and, to that end, made advances, which it would be shocking to repeat, to every pretty fellow she came in company with, even before the face of her much-injured husband; who, blinded by his passion, for a long time looked on all that she did as proceeding only from the too great vivacity of her temper. Had she observed the least degree of circumspection in her amours, he would scarce ever have believed there was a possibility of her being guilty; but she took no pains to deceive him; and though she knew he lived but in her sight, was scarce ever at home; and, through the want either of artifice or complaisance, gave herself not the pains of making any excuses for her continual rambles.

This made him at last fall into a deep melancholy; yet still he loved her, and could not for a great while prevail on himself to lay any restrictions on her conduct. All who had any knowledge of the manner in which they lived together, while they highly condemned her treatment of him, were ready to despise his lenity and forbearance. At length, however, the tables were entirely turned; from having been at first the most fond, and afterwards the passive husband, he became, all at once, the most cruel and tyrannick: he took from her all the jewels and other ornaments he had bestowed upon her; locked her into a garret; suffered no one to come near her, except a servant, who carried food to her of the coarsest kind, and no more than would just suffice to keep her from perishing.

It cannot be supposed but that so strange an alteration in the behaviour of the late fond, and indeed madly doating Cleanthes, must become the subject of much conversation in town. A lady of my acquaintance, who is reckoned to have some taste for poetry, shewed me a few lines she had wrote on the occasion, which I think may not be disagreeable to my readers. They are as follow—

'ON THE PRESENT CRUELTY OF CLEANTHES, TO A WIFE WHOM HE ONCE LOVED TO AS GREAT AN EXCESS.

'AS tapers languish at th' approach of day,
'And, by degrees, melt slow their shine away,
'Awhile they glimmer with contracted fires,
'Trembling, unable to relax their spires;
'But, when the sun's broad eye is open'd wide,
'And beams, thick flashing, shoot on every side,
'No more their emulative force they try,
'But, struck with radiance, sink at once, and die:
'So in his heart love long maintain'd it's place,
'Till full conviction glar'd him in the face,
'And forc'd th' unwilling softness to give way
'To hate, and rage, and fierce resentment's sway.
'Unhappy man!
'What wild extremes hurry thy headstrong will!
'What boist'rous passions thy vex'd bosom fill!
'To reason's sacred rules a truant still,
'Whoe'er he be the golden mean foregoes,
'Exchanges hop'd-for joys for certain woes.'

By all the discourses I heard wherever I went concerning this affair, I found, that though scarce any one pitied Aglaura, yet almost every one condemned Cleanthes; no less for his present ill-usage of her, than they had formerly done for the extravagance of his love.

'It is beneath the dignity of a man 'of sense or honour,' said one, 'to treat 'thus inhumanly a woman, how unworthy soever she may be, who is yet 'his wife.'

'If she is really guilty of having 'wronged his bed,' cried another, 'as 'indeed there is not the least room to 'doubt, why, on the discovery of her 'crime, did he not turn her out of doors? 'Why did he not sue for a divorce?'

It is certain that his way of proceeding with her appeared so odd, that many people were apt to think that her present sufferings were owing rather to a change in his own humour, than to any detection he had made of her falshood:

others, on the contrary, imagined he ſtill loved her; and that, after he had puniſhed her a while, he would forgive all that was paſt, and again take her to his boſom. Various and widely different conjectures were formed in relation both to the huſband and the wife; at all which I laughed in my ſleeve, believing, I dare ſay with a good deal of reaſon, that no one perſon in the whole world, except the Inviſible Spy, was at the bottom of this ſecret. The means by which I became maſter of it I ſhall now acquaint my readers with.

I ſupped one night at the houſe of an intimate friend at Kenſington; and happening to ſtay there more late than it was judged ſafe for me to go home alone, was very much preſſed by him to take a ſervant with me; but knowing I had a better ſecurity about me than any ſervant could be, rejected his offer; and when I was got a little way from the houſe, girded on my Belt of Inviſibility, and walked on at my leiſure, equally free from danger as from fear.

Many minutes had not elapſed in this employment, before I was diſturbed from it by the murmurs of ſome human voices, which I heard at a ſmall diſtance. My natural curioſity making me draw nearer to the place whence the ſound proceeded, I eaſily diſtinguiſhed a man of good appearance holding by the arm a genteel well-dreſſed woman, whom he ſeemed rather to drag than lead. As theſe perſons were no other than Cleanthes and Aglaura, I ſhall inſert what was ſaid by each of them under their reſpective names.

Cleanthes. Shameleſs wretch!—Can you call it an innocent frolick to come to the door of a publick coffee-houſe, and ſend in for your gallant? Had I not happened to be there, had not theſe eyes and ears been witneſſes of your guilt, you might, and doubtleſs would, have denied, forſworn it.

Aglaura. I meant no harm: I only wanted to rally him a little about ſomething I had heard concerning him.

Cleanthes. Infamous, abandoned proſtitute! Have I not an hundred times inſiſted on your never ſpeaking to that fellow more, nor to that other coxcomb, Le Brune? yet, had you not the front to run arm in arm this morning with the one into the vineyard, in the face of the whole Mall, and at night came in purſuit of the other!—But this is no time for expoſtulation; I am now convinced of the injury you have done me.

I kept pretty near to them, till they went into a coach, and drove away; and I went home ſo much aſtoniſhed at what I had heard, that I had not power to make any reflections on it for ſome time.

My mind, however, grew more ſettled by a night's repoſe; and, impatient to know how they would behave to each other after what had paſſed, I went directly to their houſe. Cleanthes was up, alone, and at breakfaſt. Soon after my entrance, a ſervant-maid came in, and ſaid to him—

Maid. Sir, my lady has called for a diſh of chocolate, but I would not preſume to carry any up without your permiſſion, as your orders laſt night were ſo poſitive that ſhe ſhould be fed with nothing but water-gruel and dry bread.

Cleanthes. Why, then, do you trouble me now? Do you think I gave orders at night to retract them in the morning? Be gone, and let me hear no more of it.

The maid withdrew, and I followed her to the room where Aglaura was now lodged, which was indeed a wretched garret. She was in bed, weeping; but, on the maid's repeating the commands of Cleanthes, her tears flowed faſter: ſhe wrung her hands, ſhe beat her breaſt. But it is more eaſy for the reader to conceive her deſpair, than for me to expreſs it; ſo I ſhall only ſay the ſpectacle was too moving, I could not bear it, but left the houſe immediately, and returned not thither till eight or ten days; in which time the town was apprized of the ſuffering of Aglaura, and ſpoke of the ſtrange change of Cleanthes in the manner I have already related.

On my next viſit, Cleanthes had with him an elderly lady, who I afterwards underſtood was his aunt. She came, it ſeems, to perſuade him to treat his tranſgreſſing wife with leſs ſeverity. The diſcourſe between them was as follows—

Lady. I am as ſenſible as you can be of the faults of Aglaura, and the diſhonour ſhe has brought upon you; yet, my dear nephew, you demean yourſelf by uſing in this faſhion a woman who, though unworthy, is ſtill your wife.

Cleanthes. Madam, I can no longer think

think of her as a wife, nor even as a woman; but as a dog that had bit me, or a ſerpent that had ſtung me.

Lady. Put her, then, out of your houſe.

Cleanthes. That would be giving her an opportunity of diſgracing me more by her proſtitutions. No, ſince I have not proofs for a divorce, I will confine her here till I can ſend her for ever from my ſight. I have already wrote to a tenant of mine in Yorkſhire; he will be in town next week, and take her with him to his houſe.

The good lady took her leave, after having heard and approved this reſolution; which, as I have been ſince informed, he put in execution as he had ſaid.

THE CONCLUSION.

HERE, O reader! a total ſtop is put to my endeavours to oblige thee. Nature has baffled all my vain precautions to preſerve my little virgin in her native purity. The woman whom I appointed to attend her accidentally dropped from her pocket the picture of a very lovely youth; the girl, unfortunately for me, as well as for thee, took it up, and was charmed with it: ſleep renewed the pleaſing image in her mind, and added life and motion to it; ſhe dreamed that it was her bedfellow; that it kiſſed, embraced, and lay within her arms; ſo that, in ſpite of all my cares, and without ever having ſeen the ſubſtance of a man, ſhe has received an idea of the difference of ſexes.

Her pretty fingers no longer have the power to cleanſe my Tablets; the dialogue laſt repeated remains ſtill unexpunged, and leaves no room for any future impreſſion. How grievous a diſappointment to me! how terrible a mortification!—But we muſt all ſubmit to deſtiny, which compels me now to bid thee eternally adieu! adieu! adieu!

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